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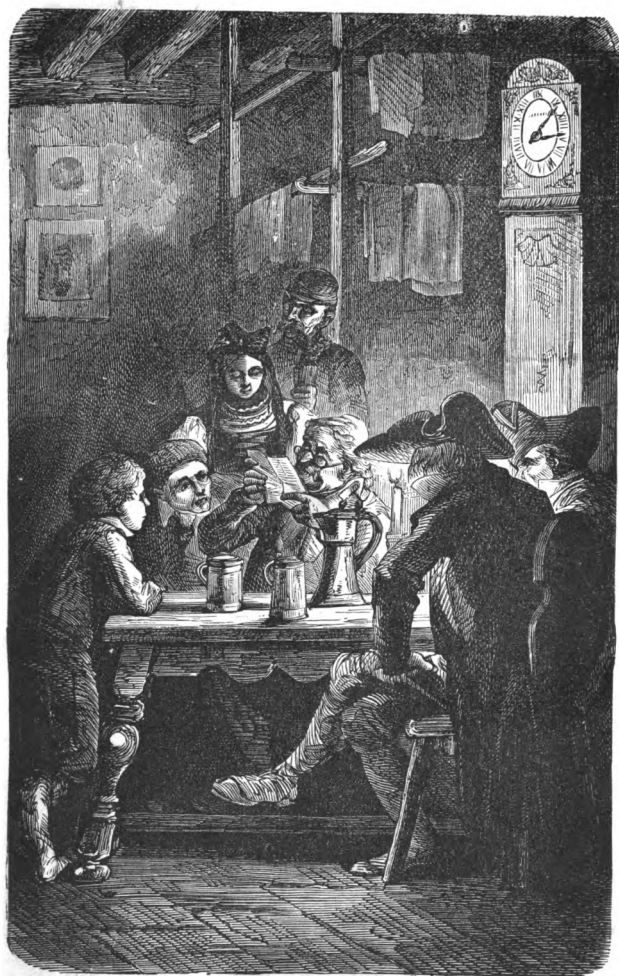


*Little Pierre, the pedlar of Alsace;
or the reward of filial piety*

Catholic Publication Society

NAS

LITTLE PIERRE.



“The old man held the letter near the candle.”

Page 2.



LITTLE PIERRE,

THE PEDLAR OF ALSACE;

OR,

THE REWARD OF FILIAL PIETY.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH,

BY

J. M. C.

With Twenty-seven Illustrations.

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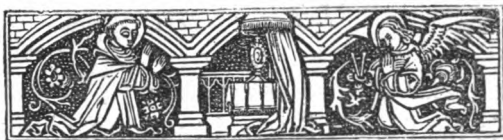
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LITTLE PIERRE,

THE PEDLAR OF ALSACE.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH.

CHAPTER I.



THICK fog covered the valley of Niederbronn, one of the most picturesque of Alsace. The houses of the village of Wasembourg were closed, with the exception of one where many persons were gathered. This was the house of Constant Winkel, the old blacksmith. He had received a letter from his son George, announcing his arrival in New York. The old man, with uncovered head, held the

letter near the flickering flame of the candle, while his friends listened to the reading with impatience :

“MY DEAR FATHER: At last I have arrived, after a voyage of twelve days on the ocean. The weather was beautiful, my heart happy. I have found all my friends, and nothing else but the sight of them could have made me forget the disappointment and sorrow caused by the first view of the ‘docks.’ Ah ! such sorrow ! Was it necessary to go so far to see this ? However, to be just, I ought to say, my father, that New York is an immense city. Astonishing ! So large that it made me afraid. Figure to yourself houses of iron and marble five stories high ! The principal street, which is called Broadway, swarms like an ant-hill with men who go in all directions, their hats down over their eyes, through an immense number of carriages, without taking the least notice of what is passing around them, first to the right, then to the left. They receive some

hard elbowings, which it is necessary to return in order to proceed on their way. The women cannot cross the street from one side to the other without the assistance of a policeman. Our *élégants* of Strasbourg would make a sad appearance in a similar hubbub.

“Now, pass on to the beautiful part of the city, called the Fifth Avenue. It is more beautiful than the Champs Elysées, where we promenaded last year. On each side of this avenue are built palaces of marble and brown stone.

“There are some fine edifices, as Trinity Church, from which there is a magnificent view; but I must add, in justice to the beauty of the landscape, that the view from the Cathedral of Strasbourg is finer. Thank God! there are plenty of churches for the Catholics, where they are happy to go on Sundays.

“Pierre Laconte has a brewery that does well; his old companions are also in good business. Rose Huleck and her daughter have more work than they can do. Is it not

astonishing that the Americans have such a passion for French fashions?

“However, my good father, the time is no more when gold grows in the streets of this great city. I shall not stay here. I shall establish myself in the West, where, for a few dollars, I can buy a farm. They tell me it is the best way of making a fortune to-day.”

When one goes over the beautiful valley of Alsace, and sees the country so well cultivated, they are astonished at the willingness of the Alsacian to leave his native land. But his adventurous character explains this love of emigration. It is not the misery that he flies from, but the fortune that he seeks. If he remains at home, the conscription claims him. “If I die on a battle-field, this is the end of all. I can but die in a foreign land; but, if I return, I shall be rich for the remainder of my days. I will marry, and my dear old mother shall have the first place at my fireside.”

Letters from America always arouse the ambition of the Alsatian. Among those who listened to the reading of the letter from George Winkel was a little boy called Pierre Lipp, thirteen years of age, the only son of the widow Lipp. His father had been one of the best workmen at the forge of Niederbronn. One day, a cry was heard that chilled all hearts: "A man wounded!" This man was the father of little Pierre, and the wound proved mortal.

The boy was then eight years old. The sight of the lifeless body of his father, brought into the house, made an impression that could never be effaced. He became changed: Madeleine, his mother, accustomed to see him always out of doors, now was obliged to force him out of the house. He assisted his mother, took care of his little sister Christine—he was handy at everything. The most sincere interest was felt for the widow Lipp. A little pension was accorded her by the worthy proprietor of the forge. They sent Pierre to school, and he

was remarkable for his industry and application. He was a beautiful and gentle boy, with a fine complexion, black eyes, firm step, and his whole appearance prepossessing. Every one predicted for him a happy future. The schoolmaster would watch him attentively, take a pinch of snuff, shake his head, and terminate his monologue by some high-sounding exclamation in his favor.

Madeleine was strong, intelligent, and willing to work at anything she was called upon to do. She brought up her children well, and merited the esteem of all honest people.

Pierre, the joy and hope of his mother, had made his first communion, and was now at an age when it became necessary to choose a trade and begin his apprenticeship. He had a horror of the forge, and never passed it unless obliged. On his return home from the house of the old blacksmith, Pierre related to his mother and little sister Christine all the wonderful news he had

heard from America. When he had concluded, his mother said :

“Oh ! my son, do not lose your appetite over America. I am afraid my Pierre will take wings and fly away.”

“And what would you say, mother, if I should tell you I had decided to go to some other country ?”

“I should say, my dear child, that you are not old enough to run about the country. I will permit you to go to Strasbourg if it will give you pleasure.”

“This permission is sufficient. Listen to me, and when you have heard what I have to say, I hope you will encourage me, and bless my projects.

“I was yet small when I saw the body of my father brought home, yet I felt a grief that suddenly changed me. I had thought of nothing but play, because I imagined there was nothing else in the world to do ; but when I saw you cry so often, and did not see father in his place, I said to myself, ‘Oh ! if I was only strong enough to earn

some money !” I very often went to the woods to cry, but, one day, I thought I would cry no more. I often felt sad, but the desire to learn consoled me. My only wish is to be able to work, so that you and Christine shall have nothing to do. I will not be prevented from doing this because I am only thirteen years and three months old, and I have consulted with our Curate to know the trade that I could learn the quickest—and, mother, I have found my trade ! I shall not go to America. I shall be a travelling merchant ; my apprenticeship is over. Look at these limbs, these arms, and these strong shoulders !” And, to give more effect to his words, Pierre advanced a few steps, caught up his little sister Christine, perched her upon his shoulders, and cried, in a loud voice, “ Good merchandise to sell !”

Christine laughed with all her heart, and if some of the rich but childless ones of this world could have seen them, I think they would have given a large sum to have had these happy children at their

" Good merchandise to sell ! "

Page 12.

they would
have had these happy children.



"Good merchandise to sell!"

Page 12.

own fireside. At length, his mother said :

“ Your ideas are good, my boy. The only thing needful is the money. Silver is necessary to buy your merchandise—where will you get it?”

“ Oh ! this will not be difficult in our country ; I will get it from some one who lends it.”

“ Assuredly ; but that I cannot consent to. I am going to tell you a story which I wish you always to remember.”

“ I will listen attentively.”

“ I knew, in my young days, a man of comfortable circumstances who had an only son. The father was industrious, and, by hard labor, had amassed some money. The son, however, was vain, and wished to be thought a gentleman. One day, he took a fancy to have a pair of silver shoe-buckles, which were then fashionable. His father, who had been contented all his life to wear leather shoe-strings, absolutely refused him the money to buy them. Indignant and

angry, the young man borrowed thirty francs, on which he promised to pay interest. The interest accumulated, and every year the complaisant usurer willingly waited, and added interest to interest.

"The fashion passed away, and the buckles were useless. Fourteen years after, the father died, leaving his son a very pretty farm. The usurer presented himself, desired nothing, promised to wait patiently. But the next year, he demanded his money. The farmer let him have some of his land; the year following, a little more, until it all passed into the hands of the usurer. That pair of buckles and his vanity cost him ten thousand francs."

"I shall never have any buckles, mother."

"But, seriously, I tell you, my son, I have a horror of borrowing: our poor little house and garden would pass away. Renounce the idea; you are a brave boy; God will send you something to do."

"I believe, mother, there is nothing I could do as well. You remember our beau-

tiful chateau. Well, I had thought of going there to see the Count and Countess, and ask them to furnish me with a small package of merchandise."

"Would you beg, my son?"

"Beg! never. Is it not a good action to go to the protectors of the poor and ask them to assist me—to lend me the sum necessary to buy my first package of goods, and every time I return give them half of my profits?"

"You are a wise child, my Pierre, and you resemble your poor father. This old proverb shall encourage us: 'Never venture, never win.' Very well; if the day is fine to-morrow, you shall go to the chateau; during the time you are absent, I will pray for you."

"I will go with you, brother," cried little Christine. "The Countess spoke to me, one day, when I was walking in her beautiful park. 'You are gentle,' she said; 'come with me, and see my children.' And I had a tart covered with red jelly."

Madeleine, the mother of these happy children, soon felt confidence in the projects of Pierre. "There has been seen here and there," thought she, "a courageous and noble boy who has been the preserver of his family, and certainly my Pierre is capable. But I shall be sad; I shall miss his voice, that so often reminds me of his father; and when the north wind blows and the sun is hidden, it will be very lonely; and sometimes, by evil associations, the mother loses the heart of her child, and nothing can repay that loss." Madeleine was not only a tender mother, she was also a woman of good sense. She let reason control her affection and sensibility, and at last entered heartily into the undertakings of little Pierre.

The next day, she prepared their best clothes, dressed them, and they set out hand-in-hand for the chateau. She stood at the door and watched them until lost in the distance. Raising her eyes to heaven, a sweet, sad smile trembled on her lips, and a mother's prayer and blessing followed them.



CHAPTER II.

PIERRE and Christine walked along, stopping from time to time to pick the fruit the birds had left. It was near the last of October, the fields were not yet deserted, and the two children had a pleasant word and smile for the laborers. Pierre, I suppose, was preparing his speech, as he seemed lost in thought, and answered in monosyllables to the lively prattle of little Christine, who held him tightly by the hand. Christine was nine years old. Being small and delicate, she was an object of great care to her brother. When they were about half-way to the castle, she said, "Pierre, I am tired." He took her up quickly, and placed her on his shoulders, no doubt thinking how soon he would be travelling over the country with his package of mer-

chandise in the same way, for our little pedlar had never once thought of refusal or failure.

Having entered the bourg of Reichshoffen, Pierre placed Christine again on her feet, arranged her little cape, which had been blown about by the wind, smoothed her hair, gave a finishing touch to his own appearance, and walked resolutely up to the entrance of the castle.

The old proverb that "Good masters make good servants" was fully exemplified when the sweet and welcome voice was heard of the wife of Hans, the guard, "What do you wish, my children?"

Pierre said, "We would like to speak to the Count."

"Enter, little children. Keep to the right through the yard."

Pierre did as he was directed, and obtained without difficulty the permission to be admitted to the Count's room.

In this castle love and charity united all hearts, and the Countess was the first to re-



"The Count was in his dressing-gown, surrounded with large books."

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The Executive Committee of the County Council shall

"My dear, he is not in the least bit afraid of me," said the little Pied-billed Grebe, "and he is not a bit afraid of you. I shall know, I assure you."

The door was in a recessed alcove, and the round, with a polished brass knob, was set into the chair, lying at the feet of the person who entered the room. The door was ajar, and a pinch of sand, which soon fell away, said, "Come in," said it, with an air of invitation, which was greatly enhanced by the fact that Pierce, who did not believe in luck, was

"Sir, Count," I am too young to
America, like the people of Constantinople.



ceive our little visitors. She caressed them, asked about their mother, and what had brought them there.

"Madame, I have a secret I wish to tell the Count."

"Truly! Will you not tell it before me?"

"Oh! yes, madame."

The Countess conducted them to the Count's room.

"My dear, here are the children of the widow Lipp. Little Pierre has a 'secret' he wishes to tell you, but he has consented that I shall know it also."

The Count was in his dressing-gown, surrounded with large books—on the bureaus, on the chairs, lying about everywhere. As they entered the room, he held between his fingers a pinch of snuff, which soon disappeared. "Come in," said he, with an air of interest, which was great encouragement to little Pierre, who thus addressed him:

"Sir Count! I am too young to go to America, like the son of Constant Winkel,

but it is necessary I should do something to sustain my mother, for I am the oldest of the family. I have been thinking, since America is so far away, that I would be a travelling merchant. Mr. Hoffman, of Hagueneau, has done well, and to-day he has a beautiful shop in a large street."

"But, my child, it would be very difficult for you to go about in all kinds of weather."

"Oh! that is nothing, sir. I am strong, and I know I can do nothing without some pain. I would commence by making short trips."

"What would you sell?"

"I do not know." And he looked towards the Countess, as if to question her.

"I will assist you in the selection, if you wish," said the Countess.

"Is this your secret, little Pierre?" asked the Count.

"Oh! sir, this is but half of it. The other half"—he hesitated—"that I wish to borrow the money of you to make my first purchases. I will render you half of my profits. I pro-

mise you this on the sacred memory of my father."

"But when would you commence? The season is not favorable at present."

"Oh! I would sell warm things in winter, and light things in summer. If you would have confidence in me, I would be contented."

"Who gave you the idea of coming to me, my little man?"

"All the world knows (and very far from here) that the Count and Countess are always seeking and assisting the poor; and as I am not rich, and needed some one to help me, I mentioned it to my mother, and here I am."

"Pierre, I will lend you the money to buy your first package of merchandise; but I shall be exacting. You must be correct; you must keep an account in perfect system and order; you must not dispose of contraband goods; and if I hear that you sell worthless books, I shall withdraw my esteem and protection. Do you understand?"

"Perfectly, sir. I will sell nothing you do not like."

"Can you count?" asked the Countess.

"Yes, madame, enough for this."

"Come and add up these figures," said the Count.

Pierre took the pen from the hand of the Count, added a half-column of figures, and asked, with a satisfied air, "Shall I prove them?"

"No; they are correct. I am satisfied. My wife will attend to your purchases. Let not the approaching winter frighten you. Procure a proper passport, and visit those places that your mother thinks proper. Pierre, remember well what I have said to you."

Christine had followed the conversation as well as she could, for she was bewildered when she saw so many beautiful pictures, so many large books, and other strange things. The Countess took her by the hand, and led her into another room. She gave them some refreshments. Pierre was radiant with joy. Christine opened wide her eyes, said not a

word, but buried her little teeth in a large piece of cake, and had the satisfaction of finding plenty of raisins.

We must do justice to Pierre, and acknowledge that his idea was a good and a noble one, and he is asking his little sister if she does not think so, as, hand-in-hand, they are leaving the castle.

If we could have heard the long and interesting descriptions those children gave their mother! They had experienced nothing but joy.

Pierre shuddered when he dreamed of entering the "paper-mill" or the "forge," and passing some years of apprenticeship without earning anything. Now, in imagination he visited different places, and was impatient to announce to his friends his approaching departure.

He went to see Constant Winkel, the old blacksmith. He wanted his counsels, for he was considered the wisest man in the little village of Wasembourg. How happy was Pierre when the old man said to him, "You

will succeed, because you are courageous. Be honest always. Do not be overanxious to gain. Remember, that the little streams make the large rivers."

Madeleine had no cause of regret. Her neighbors, who were inspired with the most sincere interest in her welfare, congratulated her, and consoled her for his departure by reminding her that the majority of the merchants who then had large shops commenced by travelling about the country.

The mayor gave him a passport, accompanied with advice and recommendations. All this interest and good counsel was not only pleasing to Pierre, but aroused his pride, and he secretly promised that he would prove himself worthy of the protection of his benefactors.

Madeleine worked early and late to put in complete order his scanty wardrobe. She took what money she had in reserve to buy him two good pairs of shoes.

I believe if he had been going to America it would have seemed no greater undertak-

ing than this trip about Alsace. "In any case," said she, "I would much rather have him come home to embrace me, from time to time, than make a large fortune. America is so far from here we know not what becomes of our poor children. There is but one Alsace in the world!"

Eight days had passed away, when the sound of a carriage aroused the attention of the inhabitants of Wasembourg; they ran to the doors, and saw it stop at the house of the widow Lipp. The most curious approached a little; a servant took from the carriage a large package and carried it into the house. The Countess and her daughters then got out. They had brought the articles destined to compose the package of little Pierre. It consisted of black and blue woollen stockings, woollen jackets, neck-handkerchiefs, steel pens, needles, scissors with steel chains, spectacles, images, etc., etc., all arranged in a handsome box covered with heavy linen, to which strong leather straps were attached for the shoulders.

Pierre thought himself rich. No one would have doubted it, could he have seen the joyous expression of his countenance. He touched each object in silence, then looked at the Countess, who was almost as happy as himself. This excellent woman inquired about the condition of his outfit. She added several articles, among them a heavy pair of leather boots, and returned to his mother the money she had spent for the two pairs of shoes.

Oh! there should be no greater happiness for the rich than to assist the poor and help them to gain an honest and industrious living. The Countess and her daughters left a perfume of joy in that cottage that never passed away.

It was decided that, in three days, Madeleine should accompany her son to the chateau, his first stopping-place, where Pierre should expose his goods so that they could see what he was capable of doing.

After the carriage had disappeared, the goods were inspected, and they estimated

them at sixty francs. Christine wanted to try on everything, and, although Pierre objected, she caught up a pair of spectacles and put them on her nose, but her mischief was excusable.

Pierre thought their friends should be the first to buy. No one came, which astonished him. His mother, however, reminded him of the old proverb: "My son, 'No one is a prophet in his own country.'"

That night, Madeleine and her children knelt down and thanked God for his goodness to them, and, after bidding each other good-night, retired to rest, full of confidence in the future.





CHAPTER III.

THE next morning, Pierre, with all his enthusiasm and courage, felt sad. The sun had been hidden, but was piercing slowly through the clouds, and gave a more cheerful appearance to the valley as they were preparing for their departure.

Madeleine was not the only one who predicted success for her son. When he was fully equipped, the pack on his back and his stick in hand, the neighbors gathered around to say good-by to the boy whom they believed was just starting on the road to fortune. The honest and intelligent face of Pierre expressed the happiness and gratitude which he felt.

It was a great event when our young merchant arrived at the chateau. He

was received by the Countess and her daughters. The Countess said kindly :

“Expose your goods ; we are going to buy. I wish to see how you will manage.”

Pierre was not embarrassed. He arranged his articles on the table with as much taste as if he had been used to it all his life. All the persons in the castle came in to buy. The Count came from his cabinet to purchase some steel pens, although he never used them. The little merchant was radiant with joy ; he took his memorandum-book from his pocket, noted down each article sold, then put his things in order. Madeleine and her children were about leaving, but the Countess insisted on their coming into the dining-room, where each one was helped to a pot of beer. While they were taking their refreshments, Mariene, the waiting-maid, says to Pierre :

“You will pass by Walbourg, my native village. In entering, at your right hand you will see a house with two windows ; there is

an old stone wall before the door. There my oldest sister, Rose, lives. Go in and say 'good-morning' for me. She will be a good acquaintance, and I am sure will buy as much as three francs' worth of you, without counting a glass of beer. You tell her I sent you to her house, and she must trade with you."

It was necessary to go. Madeleine had formed the secret determination to accompany Pierre as far as "Marienthal," which contains the cathedral celebrated as the pilgrimage of the Alsacians, which they visit as a sacred duty to the Mother of our Blessed Lord. The poor widow would have returned more contented after praying with her children in this pious sanctuary, but she found it would be impossible, as Christine was already tired, and they had come but a short distance in the direction of Walbourg.

The moment had come when they must part.

Who but a mother can describe her feelings—the hopes, the fears, that struggled in



"Pierre took his box from his shoulders to embrace his mother."

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REIGN OF THE EMPEROR OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE

FROM THE DEATH OF THE EMPEROR NERO TO THE
 DEATH OF THE EMPEROR MARCUS AURELIUS
 ANTONINUS. IN TWO VOLUMES. THE SECOND
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 ANTONINUS. IN TWO VOLUMES. THE SECOND
 VOLUME.



"There was his last journey, and he embraced his mother."
Page 11

her breast? But, for his sake, she dared not utter them.

Pierre took his box from his shoulders to embrace his mother and sister. He promised he would write to them often, and surprise them some day by his return. "For I am not going to America," said he, to comfort his mother; "and, if anything happens to you or me, I can soon be with you. Adieu! Adieu! Au revoir!"

The brave boy started, struck the ground with his stick, walked with a high head, turned occasionally to make some little sign of love to his mother and sister, then, at a turn in the path, he lost sight of them.

Pierre was relieved when he found himself alone. He sat down on the trunk of a tree, and covered his face with his hands to hide the tears that burst from his eyes. They were not tears of regret; they proved the tenderness of his heart. It seemed to him that all the events of his life passed before him. He thought of his father. "Oh!

if he had lived, I should not have left my native village !”

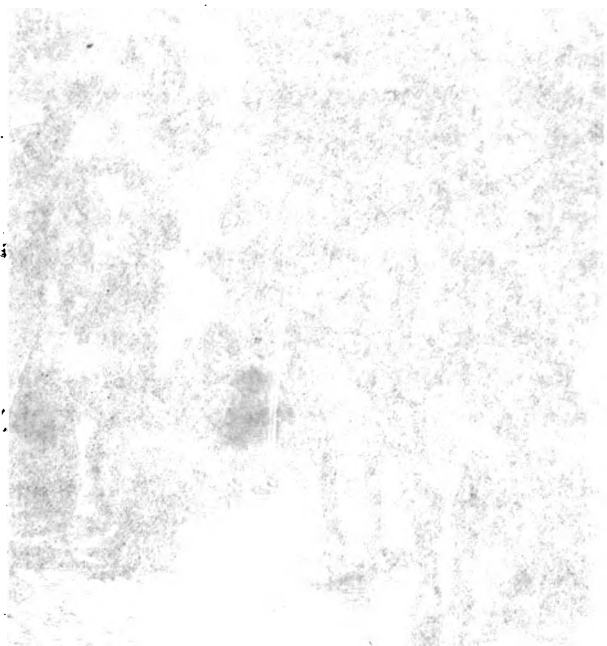
Thus it is: those things which we sincerely desire to accomplish seldom present a dark side.

However, Pierre was not a boy to be long disheartened. He got up with the resolution of starting on again — hesitated — climbed a tree to take one more look at the valley so dear to his heart. He cried out with joy as he perceived a large column of black smoke rising from the chimney of the old blacksmith's. He followed it in the air, wishing it could carry his love towards the place where he had parted with his mother.

Pierre lingered a moment longer, but, hearing steps, he descended and took up his box.

In passing some houses, he offered his goods for sale, but sold nothing. They looked at him with surprise, mingled with a little defiance.

He met a gendarme, who demanded his passport, which he took from his pocket and





"He met a gendarme."

Page 32.

handed to him. The gendarme, being assured of his identity, returned it, saying, "All right!"

In summer, the route from Reichshoffen to Walbourg is one of the most beautiful in the country, but at this season it was quite different. The rain had hollowed out deep ruts in the road, and the hedges were stripped of all their beauty. "In a few days," thought Pierre, "all will be hidden under the snow;" but he consoled himself with the idea that he could travel on during the worst weather, thanks to his stout leather boots.

It was evening when he entered Walbourg. The descriptions of Mariene were exact; he recognized the house with the old stone wall, and, although a little late, he entered, and saw a woman occupied in taking some chestnuts from a pot in which they had been boiling. He said, "Madame Rose, Mariene wished me to stop and say 'good-evening' for her."

At the name of Mariene, the young

mother looked kindly at Pierre, and said, "Come in! come in, my friend! No ceremony. My sister's friends are my friends! Take off your shoes, and warm yourself. My husband will soon be home, and we will take supper together. What shall I call you?"

"Oh! call me little Pierre, as they do at home."

"Little Pierre, what have you that is beautiful?"

"Everything! I will show you before I go."

"Wait until to-morrow; you shall stay all night with us. I will see what Charles will say."

Very soon Charles entered with a little boy about ten years of age, the oldest of the family. He received Pierre warmly. The supper was plain, but they were all joyous and happy.

Charles Muller entertained them by relating the history of several wealthy merchants who had commented in the same way

as Pierre. After supper Rose could not wait any longer. Her curiosity was a little excited. She wished to know what articles were in the box. Pierre named over the different things, and ended with mentioning cotton caps. (These are worn by the old men and women of the country.)

“Cotton caps! The very thing I have wanted these three months. There is not a pedlar that has the idea of carrying them. When I inquire for them, they say, with a disdainful air: ‘We don’t carry them any more.’ Little Pierre,” added Rose, with enthusiasm, “you will make your fortune; you have some ideas! And I ask you if there is anything equal to a ‘cap’ for a person who is obliged to go to work before day-break? And besides, they always remind me of my dear old father and grandfather.”

“Now is the time to open my package,” thought Pierre; for he had been brought up in the school of proverbs, and knew that he should “never put off until to-morrow what could be done to-day.”

He opened his box, and spread his goods out on the table. Rose immediately took up the "cotton caps," examined them, stretched them out, and inquired :

"How much are they apiece?"

"For you, one franc."

"You are a bad merchant, I think," said she laughingly. "Just because I fancy them you ask me more; but never mind, give me a half-dozen; and as good accounts make good friends, here is a seven-franc piece."

Rose did not stop there. She bought some stockings for herself, some mittens for the children, and, if Charles Muller had not "coughed" in a significant manner, the whole stock of our little pedlar would have entered the closet of his wife.

At last Pierre went to bed. He slept soundly, and was up at daylight. He examined his memorandum-book, and smiled with satisfaction when he found he had made three francs "net profit," as Rose would not allow him to pay for her hospi-

talities. "My fortune will soon be made if things go on like this," thought Pierre; "but," he added lowly, "day succeeds day, yet they do not resemble each other."

As soon as he heard the doors open he descended. The sound of the bell reminded him of his mother.

"She is now praying for me, I am sure! I will go and pray for her and Christine."

He disappeared, and returned just as Rose was worrying about him, for she thought he had gone to a "café" for his breakfast; but when she found he had been to church she was pleased. "That is right, my child; never forget the good examples received from your parents. Go always in the path of virtue, avoid the wicked, and Providence will protect you."

The husband and wife gave Pierre all the directions necessary to assist him in his route. "Do not be afraid to go to the castle; they are good people there. Take the forest; you will arrive at a large farm on the right; the woodcutters will direct

you to Haguenau. From there the route will be easy to Marienthal. Adieu, little Pierre! Take good care of your silver, and do not accept of liquor from any one."

The village of Walbourg is remarkable for the regularity of its houses. It is a long street, and at the end stands the castle. Pierre walked along, crying in a loud voice: "Here is the merchant! Ladies and gentlemen, come and buy! Woollen stockings, needles, scissors, chaplets, and images!"

The children followed him. Some called their mothers, who stared at the unknown face of the little merchant.

Pierre arrived near the castle. A little girl and her brother ran towards him. They called him, ran off again, and returned with their nurse, who thought herself of great importance because she lived in the castle. She said, with a haughty air, "Enter by the little gate."

Pierre obeyed. She ordered him to open his box, and spread his goods on a table that was in a hall near the kitchen. She

examined everything, and finished by saying, "You can put them up again; I am not going to buy."

Pierre felt mortified. He was replacing them carefully, when little Marie, seeing the images, declared, with the authority of a spoiled child, that she would buy them and pay for them from her own purse.

Vainly Ursula tried to change her determination. The nurse was obliged to go with her to the castle to her mamma, who gave Marie and Jacques two francs to buy some images.

The children returned out of breath; selected the images themselves. Ursula tried to make him take less, but she was obliged to agree with Marie and Jacques, who said, "No! it is not too much; the images are very pretty!"

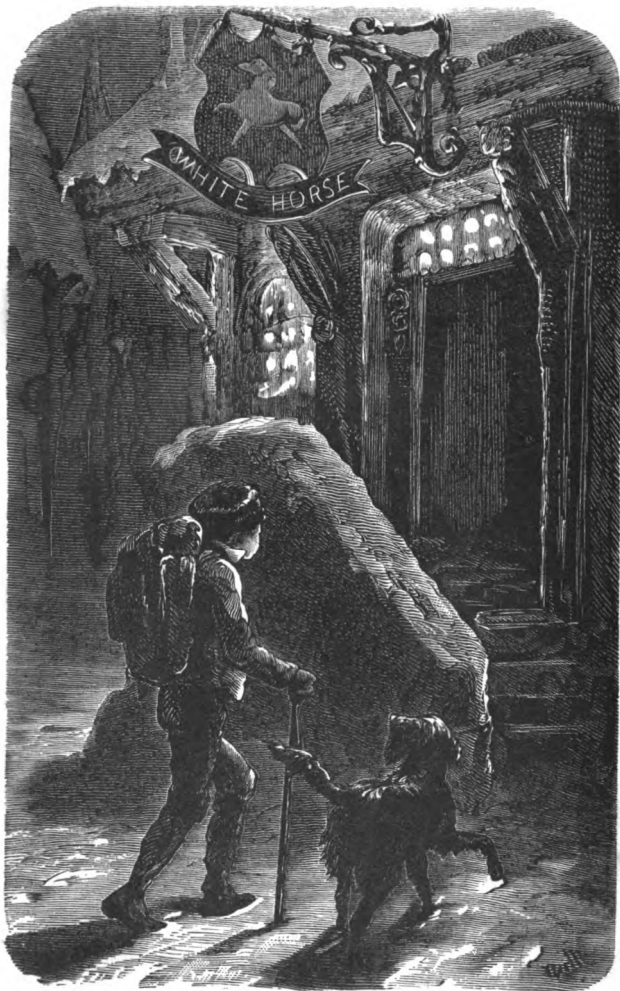
He had advanced but a few steps when a black dog ran before him and kept barking. He immediately recognized the dog as one he had seen at the house of Rose, and was thinking of returning with it, when Charles

Muller appeared. "I have brought him to you, Pierre. My wife thought he would be a companion for you in your travels ; he is a good animal. Amuse him until I get out of sight. As he has seen you at our house, he will believe that he is going for a short walk, and will follow you."

This remembrance was a true joy to Pierre. "Thank you ! Thank you, my good friends ! I am delighted ! Fox and I will travel the same road, for good or for ill."

The dog followed along by the side of his new master, who could not take his eyes from him.





' It was near night when Pierre entered the little inn."

Page 4.



CHAPTER IV.

QUR two travellers walked briskly, resolved to reach that night the charming little village of Haguenau, situated near the forest of the same name. The dog, going and coming, barked at the least noise. This souvenir of Charles and Rose, the kindness that he had already received, occupied the thoughts of Pierre, and he arrived at Haguenau without noticing the length of the road.

It was near night when Pierre entered the little inn of the "White Horse." His arrival surprised the hostess: but when he mentioned the name of Charles Muller, he was warmly received. She asked him to come to the fire, for since morning a strong east wind had commenced blowing, and our little traveller had suffered with the cold.

Pierre called for his supper with some embarrassment, and if it had not been for his package and his honest face he would not have received much attention.

It seemed a great affair to Pierre to call for his supper alone at an inn, and then to take out his purse to pay for it; however, they served him a very good meal, consisting of bacon, cabbage, bread, and a mug of beer.

The mistress of the inn lost no time in inquiring where he came from and where he was going. As soon as he mentioned his name, she seemed to take great interest in him. She remembered having seen Madeleine and her children after the accident at the forge.

“How time passes! You were a small boy then, and now you are the support of the family! Have courage! I know other Alsacians who have succeeded. When we took this inn, we had not twenty francs, and to-day—” She did not finish the sentence.

After giving Fox his supper, Pierre went

to bed, and, as the coverlid was soiled, he gave the dog a place on the foot of the bed. The wind shook the windows, and the bed was so hard our little traveller could not sleep. He got up early, and reached the church just as the doors were opened. Entering, he knelt down, and prayed for new strength to persevere in his enterprise?

He admired the three altars of carved wood, which are the principal ornaments of this beautiful church. Pierre went out contented; even the remembrance of the disagreeable nurse at Walbourg was effaced. There was every appearance of a severe snow-storm, yet he was not frightened. With an air of satisfaction, he called for his breakfast.

After some conversation, the good mistress asked him if he carried any spectacles in his box (for her eye-sight was failing). When Pierre answered affirmatively, she uttered an exclamation of joy. "You are the first of all the merchants that pass here that have thought of persons of my age!

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"She tried on all the glasses."

Page 44.

They offer me plenty of gewgaws that I don't care to see." Pierre opened his box, and handed Madame Schmitt an assortment of spectacles—showed her the different numbers. She tried on all the glasses, and, after hesitating half an hour, selected a pair. "It is astonishing where you get your ideas! Why, for twenty years that I have been in this inn, there has not been one, young or old, who has offered me a steel chain!"

After buying a chain, "Now," said she, "we will settle our accounts. It is me, I think, that owes you."

He took out his book, and entered his receipts and expenses. As he did so, he seemed to hear the Count and Countess advising him, which strengthened his resolution to return a correct account.

Taking leave of Madame Schmitt, he directed his steps towards Marienthal, the celebrated pilgrimage of Alsace. Pierre remembered that his mother had intended visiting Marienthal with her children after

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"She tried on all the glasses."

Page 44.

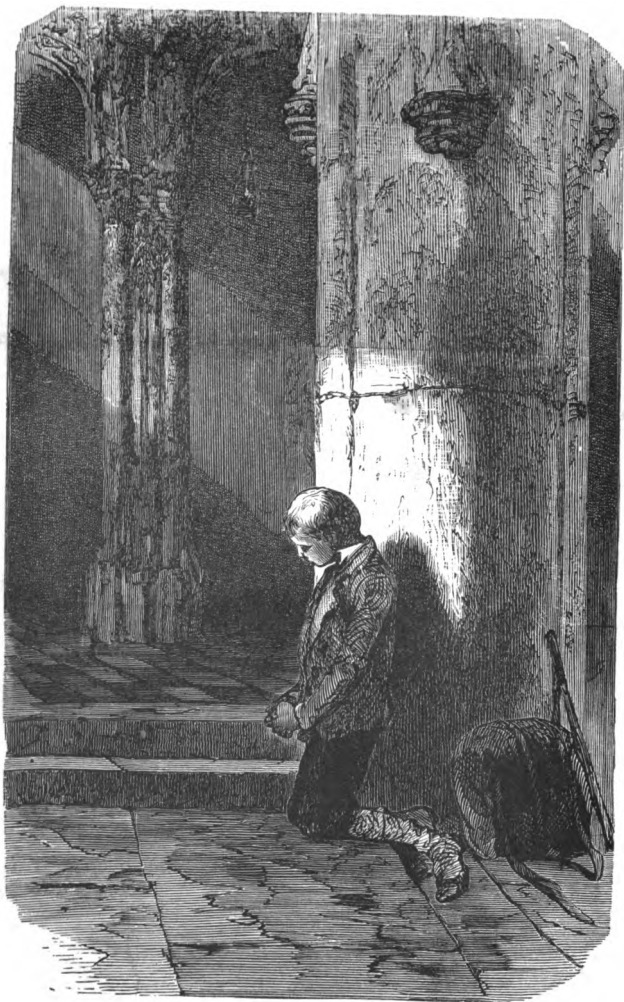
the death of her husband, but had been prevented from doing so; but "to-day," thought he, "I enter it from my own desire. I would have walked six leagues farther to have come here!"

During the time that Pierre is walking along in the forest, we will make the reader acquainted with the origin of "The Pilgrimage to Marienthal."

This pious pilgrimage was founded towards the middle of the thirteenth century by a Lord of Wangen, who constructed in the forest of Haguenau a church in honor of the Blessed Virgin, and a convent, which he gave to the order, and which he afterwards entered. A few years after the foundation of Marienthal, Pope Innocent IV., of illustrious memory, declared himself the protector of the pilgrimage, accorded to it many privileges, and enriched it with precious indulgences. The surrounding population, attracted by the virtues of its founder, came in crowds to venerate Mary and solicit grace. The number of votive and thanks-

giving offerings bore testimony to the many graces obtained by the intercession of Our Lady of Marienthal.

Among the illustrious pilgrims who visited this place was Stanislas Leszczinski, King of Poland, the queen, and their only daughter, Marie. They were driven from Poland, and had sought refuge at Wissembourg in Alsace. These noble exiles had a tender devotion for the church of Marienthal, and would often walk eight miles to this sanctuary to ask for better days through the intercession of Mary. The remembrance of the devotion of the young princess has never been forgotten in that country. One day, before leaving, the queen deposited on the altar of the Virgin a chasuble of great beauty, and a bouquet of precious stones, which are only used on days of great solemnity. When Queen of France, she still retained the greatest devotion for Our Lady of Marienthal, and every year sent an ambassador with her expressions of gratitude. Marienthal has survived all the struggles that have desolated the church,



"The chapel was open."

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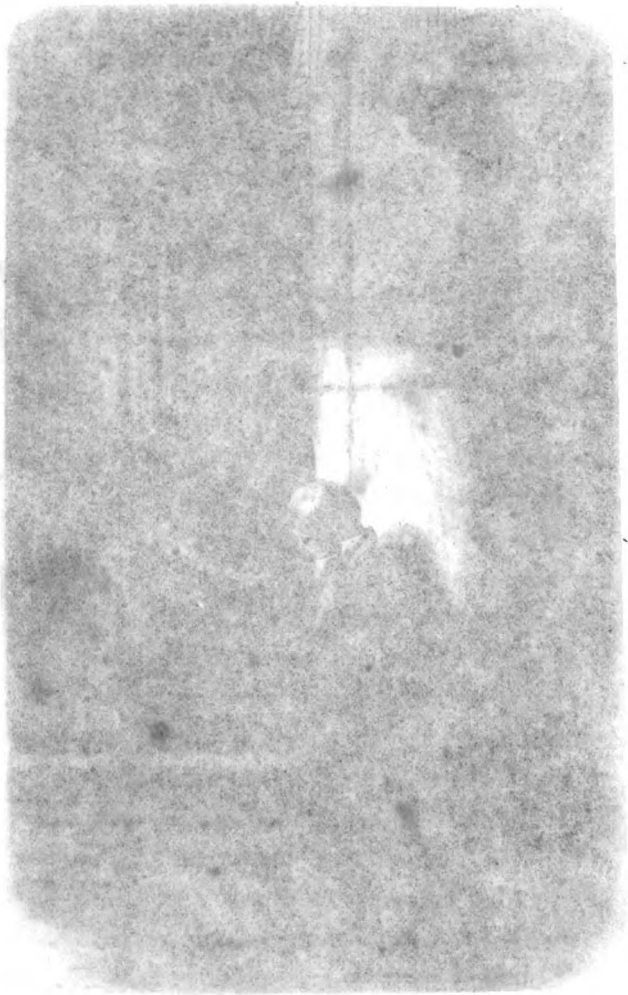
to-day this sanctuary is visited by
hundreds of pilgrims. The 15th of the
month of August, the feast of the
Assumption, being the conventional
time of the ~~holy~~ being his annual
to celebrate the pilgrims made their
the day, and in their carriage.

It was a happy day when Pierre and his
aunt, M. Mathias, the son of the old man, took
Some good-cutters and took them to the
kitchen, and the foot of the stair: and the
day was the first. It was a good day
if the boys were so good to
play with them like that. It was a good
day for all.

During the day, the two men talked over the inn, and then, after his supper, talked with the two soldiers, and finally, after midnight, they went to bed.

The text is a handwritten note on lined paper. It reads: "The text is a handwritten note. It appears to be a note about a group of people, possibly a group of people who are working together. It seems to be a note about a group of people who are working together." The handwriting is in cursive and somewhat faded. The note is written on a piece of lined paper with horizontal lines. The text is written in dark ink. The note is a single paragraph of text. The note is a handwritten note. It appears to be a note about a group of people, possibly a group of people who are working together. It seems to be a note about a group of people who are working together.

E. coli O157:H7 was isolated from ground beef.



and to-day this sanctuary is visited by multitudes of pilgrims. The 15th of August, Assumption Day, the concourse is immense. The hotels being insufficient to accommodate the pilgrims, many sleep in the church, many in their carriages.

The chapel was open when Pierre arrived at Marienthal. He was anxious to enter. Some wood-cutters and their children were kneeling at the foot of the altar; he knelt down beside them. It seemed to him that, if his prayers were offered in company with poor people like himself, they would have more effect.

Leaving the church, he directed his steps towards the inn, entered bravely, called for his supper, talked with the mistress, sold some articles to travellers who were stopping there, and went to bed contentedly.

The next day he started for Bischwillers. Since the moment of his departure, Pierre thought of all that was passing at home, and it seemed to him that he was always the subject of conversation. Do not accuse him of

conceit, for children know that their mothers never forget them, particularly when absent. Pierre was right in saying, "How they think of me! And Christine, poor little sister! I am not there to do the rough work; but, oh! what joy when I return!"

These thoughts gave him a new start. He was on the road to Bischwillers, and had gone quite a distance without having occasion to open his box, when a young girl, driving a flock of geese, accosted him, and asked timidly if he had a mourning cape?

He replied, "Not a single one."

"Is it possible! You think, then, only of those who have a happy heart? More than three months I have had the silver in my pocket, hoping some day I could buy me a black fichu."

Pierre experienced some confusion in being reproached so unjustly. He promised the young girl he would bring her one when he returned, if she would point out to him the little cottage where she lived. After doing so, he asked her if she did not wish a chaplet.

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"A young girl, driving a flock of geese."

Page 48.

“Oh! no, thank you, I have this one of my mother’s,” said she, drawing one from her pocket, the appearance of which testified to the age and use.

This meeting plunged Pierre in a little serious reflection. “Without doubt, she is an orphan,” thought he. “I am sure she has no brother, like Christine. Poor child!” But these reflections soon passed away.

In warm weather, the country from Marienthal to Bischwillers is one vast field of hops. As Pierre passed along, he thought of his return, and imagined he saw on the plains, now covered with snow, the beautiful green leaves of the hop encircling the long poles placed there for it to twine around.

Bischwillers is the chief city of the canton, a short distance from Strasbourg. At the time Pierre arrived there, this city had not gained the importance that it has since acquired by the manufacture of cloth and other things.

The solitude and quiet of the country had never made our little traveller afraid, but as

he approached Bischwillers and Strasbourg, the object of his ambition, it made a different impression on him—he was not quite sure of his confidence in himself.

The hotel where he stopped was full of people, for it was market-day. A number of men were seated around the tables, talking in a loud voice of their business, and in a tone that announced a quarrel; some were playing cards, others dominoes; there were none of them quiet. All of them looked at Pierre when he entered.

The appearance of a child always excites interest or curiosity. The most indifferent could not help noticing the little merchant, with a good face and well dressed. But in these noisy crowds, it is a rare thing not to meet some who find pleasure in annoying the young and innocent.

Pierre, without raising his eyes, seated himself at the end of a long table. He had commenced eating, when a man interrupted him by asking what his merchandise consisted of. He stopped eating to answer,

when he desired him to open his box and spread out his goods. When this bad man had seen and examined all, he said to the child, with a derisive laugh :

“Very good, my son. I wished to assure myself of your desire to please. Because, you see, I protect the young. I wish to give you good counsel. Now, I shall pay you in a glass of brandy. There! restrain those tears that I see at the windows of those beautiful eyes.”

A loud laugh ended this tirade, but it found no echo. The landlord shrugged his shoulders, and his wife whispered to Pierre, “You go into the kitchen until they go.” Pierre shed no more tears, he put his box in order, finished his dinner, and, without saying a word, passed into the kitchen. The landlady, on rejoining him, said :

“My dear child, do not be cast down, but, believe me, at your age it is imprudent to enter houses like ours. Carry something to eat in your box with you, and stop only when you wish a glass of beer. You have

selected a dangerous trade. Are you an orphan?"

On the invitation of the hostess, Pierre sat down and related the history of his life.

"After all, you will succeed," said the good woman; "and as you are going to Strasbourg, I will direct you to a good place. You enter by the stone gate, and go to the Haute Montée; they are good people, who will not swallow your purse. Be guided by them in the selection of your purchases, and when you return do not fail to stop and see me."

After this friendly advice, she purchased a hundred needles and a pair of white stockings.

Pierre followed the advice of the landlady by putting in his pocket some lunch, and it was well he did so, for he had a long walk over the barren plains that lie between Bischwillers and Hert, his next stopping-place.

The wickedness of the man at the inn came in his mind, and he walked faster, as

if to fly from him. Pierre could not understand what pleasure this man found in annoying him at that time. "Oh!" said he, "if I live to be a man, how often I shall think of my youthful days! I will always protect the little travelling merchants, the little shepherdesses—all the world." And he began to cry, for the view of this country, so different from his own, saddened his heart. He tried to smother his emotion, when, at the turn in the road, he saw an old man on crutches approaching him. Pierre bowed to him respectfully; the old man said:

"I do not wish to buy, my child; I am going a few steps from here to get my bread for the week, and it is almost impossible, for I have the gout, and have been crying all night with pain. But where are you going?"

Pierre replied, "Do not go any further, take some of my bread and sausage, and, perhaps, to-morrow you will be better able to make your little journey."

"I will accept of it, my child. This charity

will certainly bring a benediction on you. Will you go and rest in my cottage?"

"Thank you! good father. It is necessary that I get to Hert as soon as possible; the days are short at this season of the year, and I am afraid it will snow."

"Adieu! then. May thy road be easy, and the remembrance of a good action render your burden light!"

Perhaps you are surprised—Pierre was—that he should receive so many thanks for a morsel of bread. He ought not to have been, for the smallest charity carries its reward with it. If you had seen Pierre, scarlet with emotion; looking at the old man as he returned to his cottage, you would have envied him his happiness.

Forget not to be charitable; give a portion of whatever you possess, and you certainly have as much as our little Pierre. The remembrance of this meeting cheered him, and he arrived in good time at Hert.

Pierre was so honest his face gave you confidence in him. There was so much

sincerity in his voice that more than one wicked boy listened to his words. He sold a good many things in Hert, rested awhile, then started again with a more joyous heart.





CHAPTER V.

ON leaving Hert, Pierre had to cross another barren plain. It was growing cold, for winter had set in, and Alsace is a very cold country. It began to snow, and he blessed the Countess for his stout boots. He viewed with a philosophic air the snow as it fell thickly on his mantle, occasionally stopping to shake it off.

His journey was difficult and painful, but Pierre bravely endured the present by thinking of the future. "When I return, the hedges and these plains will be green. How much will I gain? Then I shall go to the castle with my account. My portion I shall put in the closet, in the very box where my father put the money he brought home every Saturday. What things I shall have to relate!"

Despite his courage, he was a little down-hearted, and it was a great relief to him when he perceived a cluster of trees about a half-hour's walk from Reichsett.

We will not follow Pierre as he visits the three small villages that lie so near each other ; it is sufficient to know that he succeeded so well, that it became necessary to go to Strasbourg to replenish his box.

Christmas-eve our little Pierre was within a league of the capital of Alsace. In passing a park, he heard the happy laughter of some children playing in the snow, and rejoicing over the prospect of the coming festival.

"Oh!" said a little girl, when she saw Pierre, "perhaps he has something pretty for our Christmas-tree! Mamma would buy of him, for she was going to send Bridgett to Strasbourg for some presents." Cecile called out loudly, "Little merchant! little merchant! wait a minute!" And they all flew like a flock of birds towards him. This thought of Cecile's was appreciated by

the family. Bridgett was sent after Pierre, for Madame Franck had already taken an interest in this poor boy. Bridgett was told to conduct him to the kitchen and take good care of him. After taking off his cloak, she said to him :

“ I know by your looks that you are a good boy ; for, I must say, there are some of your trade that are thieves ; they deceive everybody. If you buy a linen handkerchief, they will change it, and after they are gone you will find it is cotton.”

“ My articles are good, for they were all selected by the Countess of our grand castle at home.”

“ Truly, if that lady is like our mistress, your goods are well chosen.”

Bridgett would have continued the conversation if Cecile had not come to say that her mother and grandmother were ready to speak to Pierre. He was then conducted to the ladies in another apartment. Odile, an older sister of Cecile's, was present. Our young merchant arranged his goods with a

care and an address that charmed all but Odile. She seemed surprised. "My dear mother," said she, "I could have told you he had nothing that would look well on a Christmas-tree."

"I am not of your opinion, my daughter," said Madame Franck. "You will find that our poor people will consider them a fortune. My children, you will find them very useful. Have you not your poor, Odile?"

"Certainly! But a Christmas-tree is a different thing; Cecile and the others will not be satisfied." This was said in a low voice, but Pierre knew very well that Odile did not favor the purchase. "Oh!" thought he, "I will buy in Strasbourg some rings, buckles, earrings — foolish things, it is true, but I must have articles to please all." To his great surprise, things turned out differently from what he expected.

Madame Franck examined each article, asked the price, and, when the bargain was concluded, she handed Pierre two pieces of

gold, the first that had entered his purse. He looked at it, turned red, then pale. Madame Franck said to him, "My friend, are you in a hurry to go further?"

"No, madame. I am going to Strasbourg to replenish my box."

"Oh! very well. I invite you, my boy, to remain and see our Christmas-tree. You will, of course, attend Midnight Mass, and after taking refreshments with our people you can then start."

Pierre was so overcome he could hardly say, "Thank you, madame." He thought of the old man, and seemed to hear his benedictions, and these words escaped his lips, "He was right." Happily no one heard what he said, for I am sure it would have grieved him to speak of this good action. He meant to keep it a secret, and never mention it except to rejoice his mother's heart.

Odile was good and generous, but she was yet ignorant of all the little acts that make true charity.

In an adjoining room was the Christmas-tree. The children, with all their little friends and the domestics, had assembled, and were waiting impatiently for the doors to open. What questions! what predictions!—some jumping, others laughing, such a hubbub! All escaped Bridgett's authority. Cecile, on tip-toe, lifted up by one of her brothers, could just peep through the keyhole. The result of this painful labor only increased the exclamations of Cecile.

At last the besieged door was opened. The surprise was so great they were, for a few moments, almost speechless.

A large green tree, placed in the centre of the room, was loaded with presents of every description; a bouquet accompanied each object; hundreds of little red and blue balls and colored glass cups were suspended from the branches, with all kinds of delicious fruit; but the best thing, and that which caused the greatest enthusiasm, was our Pierre, perched on the top of the tree, dressed up in all his merchandise, with a

large doll in his arms ; on his breast was printed, in large letters, "Cecile." The little girl was not intimidated with her strange present. They could hardly make her understand that she must wait until he came down. The tree was soon stripped ; then Pierre descended, and, going to Cecile, placed at her feet a basket filled with a variety of objects. Madame Franck then said, in explanation :

"It is to Cecile we owe the presence of Pierre. It was her idea of buying, and she wished him to come in because it was so cold. All that was in the box of the little merchant, therefore, belongs to her ; she shall present them to whom she pleases."

Red, partly laughing, and just ready to cry, Cecile distributed the contents of the basket with a tact that charmed and amused everybody. She commenced by taking the large doll, and, handing it to Bridgett, said, "This is for me ; take good care of it !" All were presented with something. Those that were absent by illness, and some old

friends, Cecile said she would have the pleasure of taking their presents to them the following day.

Pierre was the object of interest ; they all predicted a good fortune for him.

When the midnight-bell rang, Pierre went to the chapel in company with Madame Franck and family. He thought of his mother, of Christine, and home. He said softly, "They are also at Mass, for they adore the Infant Jesus." He prayed and he cried. All of a sudden the Christmas carols burst upon his ear and rejoiced his heart. Pierre had a beautiful voice. He began to sing, and sung so well that Cecile, sleeping in the arms of her nurse, awoke and slept no more.

The remembrance of this sweet hospitality was never effaced from his mind.

Wishing to write to his mother, he remembered he had sold all his pens. He asked Bridgett to lend him one ; she had none. She said she never wrote ; for the best of reasons — she knew not how.

"However, sit down there; I will find you one." In a few moments, Pierre saw Cecile coming with pen, ink, and paper. The little girl sat near him all the time he was writing; she was in raptures in having her own guest. Standing with her head to one side, she followed with interest his hand, saying every few moments, "What is it you are writing?" A smile was the response. More privileged than Cecile, you may read the letter that Pierre wrote to his mother:

"IN A BEAUTIFUL CASTLE, Dec. 25.

"MY DEAR MOTHER: The date of this letter will not surprise you more than it does me. Ah! when we travel, we experience all sorts of things. Just now, my condition is charming. Figure to yourself that I was within a short distance of Strasbourg! When passing before a beautiful park, where some children were making snowballs, a little girl, called Cecile, about six years of age, who has black eyes and light hair, like my sister Christine, called me, and made me

go with her to the house of her mamma. Oh! my mother, in this house are to be found the true riches of this world—'The gift of making others happy.' Madame Franck, the mother of Cecile, bought all I had left in my box, and gave me two pieces of gold. Yes! do not think I am deceiving you. Two pieces of gold! They have had a beautiful Christmas-tree, and your little Pierre has been posted on the top of the tree, with all his merchandise. What a fine effect I must have made, in the centre of the blue and red glass balls, and the flowers and verdure! I was adjudged to my little Protectress, to whom were given all the articles to distribute. Madame Franck invited me to remain, and I truly believe, mother, that I was proud. I attended Midnight Mass with the family. I said I am sure my mother and Christine are also there. It seemed to me that I was at your side, and that we were all praying together. I was contented and tranquil among these good people, when suddenly they commenced to

sing the Christmas carol that we love so much, and that father used to sing when we were little. Then, without paying attention to the tears that were coursing down my cheeks, I, who am not bold, commenced to sing also.

“I have slept in a good bed, and have already had my breakfast, and, after having finished this letter that I am writing you, in company with Cecile, who is very much astonished at my knowledge, I shall return my thanks to Madame Franck and the servants, and start for the grand city. Mother, do not worry. You see that Heaven protects me; and we will all work together on our little farm. I embrace you, my dear mother, and also my sister, with all my heart.

“PETIT PIERRE.

“P.S.—My best respects to our worthy protectors and good neighbors. I have not yet had frosted hands. Perhaps it is because I have taken from my account enough to buy a good pair of gloves. It is not affectation, I assure you, but I could not displease the people with my ugly hands.”

Pierre went away with his heart full of gratitude, and promised that he would never pass the chateau without stopping. He soon found a post-office, and put his letter in the box, with a sentiment of pride.

It grew very cold as Pierre approached Strasbourg, and his heart beat faster; his curiosity was excited; everything passed in his mind—the name of the people to whom he was recommended, his receipts and expenses, the list of articles to buy. The first article on the list was the “mourning collar.” Pierre could not forget the motherless. He was going to enter those beautiful stores to make his purchases. Then he took his large leathern purse, and began searching for his two pieces of gold, and, without fear of being seen, he put them in his hand to admire them.

The face of the Prince, the year, the words on it, were ineffaceably engraven on his memory.

Having arrived near the city, he thought of the advice the kind landlady of Bisch-

willers had given him. He went into a baker's shop, and bought a beautiful, round, gilded loaf of bread, such as he had never seen in the villages, and relished it with an appetite new to him.

At last, our little traveller entered into Strasbourg, by the stone gate near the Hôtel Haute Montée.

He noticed the large houses, many stories high, with little balconies almost to the roofs. The passers-by, the carts, all the busy people, did not frighten him; he seemed to be in a country of acquaintances; whenever he asked to be directed on his road, they answered him with politeness and pleasure. It was market-day.

Pierre stopped to contemplate at his ease the peasants, who were arriving from all directions, carrying on their heads large baskets filled with all kinds of marketable food. He had never seen such elegance. The men wore short breeches and little white aprons, a short square coat of brown cloth, a red vest, and a four-cornered hat. The women

with their long braided tresses tied with ribbons; around their necks a cravat of black silk, or a collar tied behind, or on their shoulders; a short red petticoat, and a little black cap, wadded and quilted. All this was to Pierre a veritable picture, and, after carefully observing everything, he decided to take the road to the Haute Montée. The landlady of the inn, Madame Knops, was a kind woman, accustomed to see people of all kinds coming and going; but we believe that she was a good judge of faces, for she responded with an unusual cordiality to the many questions of Pierre. She mentioned some of the merchants that he could buy of with advantage; gave him a place by the fire, and was not sparing of good advice.

Without losing time during his sojourn in the capital of Alsace, Pierre started to see the curiosities of the city. He commenced by visiting the grand Cathedral that he had heard of so often.

The Cathedral looked grand indeed. As the ground was covered with snow, and the

sky blue and pure, it stood out in bold relief. Pierre rested a long time before the grand entrance, counting the fourteen statues, representing the prophets of the Old Testament; the two gates, one to the right, the other to the left, did not escape his observation. However, he had the sense to keep near two travellers, who were furnished with a guide, and listened attentively to his explanations.

He followed these gentlemen to the entrance on the right side, where stands a beautiful statue of the Virgin Mary, carrying the infant Jesus in her arms. He stopped a long time before this statue.

Some pigeons were fluttering about the cornices of the Cathedral, and coming to rest on the Virgin and Infant; Pierre thought this so beautiful, he could hardly detach his eyes from them. "But," thought he, "the travellers will be entering, and, if I keep near them, I ought to profit by their instruction."

He entered. To the light of the day succeeded a gloom that transformed his



"You see," said the Corporal.

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curiosity into a pious meditation. The clock announced that it wanted but a quarter of an hour of noon. Soldiers began to arrive; children with their mothers; the curious of all classes directed their steps towards the "Famous Clock." He took his place among them to see what he had so many times heard described.

The two travellers were also there, saying many things of which Pierre could comprehend nothing. All his attention was concentrated on the statues that were going to move at the first stroke of noon. Happily, among the curious all people are not learned, and Pierre heard a soldier giving his comrade some explanations easy to understand. "You see," said the corporal, "these figures, they strike the quarters of the hour. The four others are called the 'Four Ages of Life,' they strike the hours, and the Death also. Every hour the child that you see commences the march, and announces the first quarter; the youth, who has the air of a chasseur, strikes the half

with his arrow ; then, this man covered with iron, a true brave, he strikes the three-quarters with the sword that he carries. At last you see the old man advancing, leaning on his crutches, he is going to strike the four-quarters. Notice carefully each figure. Death is going to strike the bell placed at the right, with the bones he holds in his hand. Now, comrade, attention, look higher up ; under the 'Wise Men of the East,' you see the figure of our Saviour ; as soon as Death strikes the last stroke of noon, we shall see the Twelve Apostles pass, and the cock to the left, perched on this tower, will flap his wings, raise his head, and crow three times."

At last the corporal had finished his explanations, and everything passed as he had announced.

There is experienced a new pleasure every time we witness the wonderful mechanism of this clock. Homage should be rendered to M. Schiwelqué, who, after the greatest perseverance and study, was suc-

cessful in restoring this work of science and of art, begun centuries ago.

Pierre felt he was quite a man after seeing this wonderful clock; and I have no doubt our two travellers felt the same. These gentlemen, like many others, wished to go up on the platform of the Cathedral, and Pierre followed them; he did not say to the guide, "I am of their party," neither did he give him anything; but he looked at him as if to say, "These gentlemen will pay you well; I am only a little Alsatian merchant, and you do not wish anything from me." Pierre, taking his silence for consent, flew up the steps in company with the gentlemen, as light-hearted as a bird.

Although the country was covered with snow, and looked like an immense white cloth spread over it, it was not without beauty. The city, the fields, the trees, the isles of the Rhine, the villages, the mountains, all together constituted for Pierre a view truly ravishing; his unknown friends seemed disappointed, and considered their

trouble was lost, as no verdure was visible. "Ah!" thought Pierre, "if Christine was here, she would believe this to be a country of sugar."

The travellers were about descending; and Pierre was obliged to accompany them; but he felt that he had accomplished a great deal, and he felt some pride when he thought he could say on his return, "'I have been on the highest clock in the world.' I should like to promenade in the beautiful city with my mother and Christine. Perhaps I will in time, but I must have patience and perseverance."

Our brave Pierre walked about the beautiful parts of the city, admired the Imperial chateau. All the houses were so different from those he had seen. The shops, the merchants, the display of those beautiful ribbons embroidered in gold and silver—everything was full of interest to him.

One more day was left for pleasure; it was Sunday, and he thought, "I must certainly employ it well." The weather was



"A poor woman carrying an infant . . . commenced to sing."

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After going to the Cathedral in the morning, the good hostess advised him to go towards Robertsau. He met many there, some swangers as himself; but exchanged not a word with any one.

He went on until he arrived at a brew-house. Notwithstanding the season, the door was closed, and he saw many persons drinking beer and smoking their pipes. Pierre looked in, and asked in, "Shall I enter?"

"You are of the stomach," a mug of beer was given him, "a mug of beer is good for my dinner."

He drank with a desolate air, but a close observer would have noticed his timidity.

"I thought," he said, "the same as these men, merchants! Why, it is incredible! But

what can I do? I must pay, and will give the waiter what he asks. What would my mother say?

"What would she say if she would be pleased."

He was drinking his beer slowly, and was thinking of his mother, when a poor woman carrying a bundle on her back entered, and, going to the door of the room, commenced to sing

some of the popular airs that are sung in the country.

At the same time, a man of about thirty years of age, with a beard and a



fine, and, after going to the Cathedral in the morning, the good hostess advised him to walk towards Robertsau. He met many people, some strangers as himself; but exchanged not a word with any one.

He walked on until he arrived at a brewery. Notwithstanding the season, the door stood open, and he saw many persons drinking beer and smoking their pipes. Pierre stopped and looked in. "Shall I enter?"

"Yes," answered the stomach, "a mug of beer will answer very well for my dinner."

He entered with a resolute air, but a close observer would have noticed his timidity. "I here," thought he, "the same as these large merchants! Why, it is incredible! But I am going to pay, and will give the waiter something. What would my mother say? I wish I knew if she would be pleased."

Pierre sat drinking his beer slowly, and looking about, when a poor woman carrying an infant in her arms entered, and, going to the centre of the room, commenced to sing one of those popular airs that gladden the

heart; but her voice was poor, and so harsh that no one could listen. Some of the persons, becoming tired of her presence and her singing, prayed her to stop and leave the room.

“My God!” said the poor woman, and her eyes met those of Pierre. He immediately went to her, and said :

“Wait! I am going to finish the song for you.” And without waiting a moment, our good little Pierre commenced to sing. His voice, so pure and beautiful, produced an effect magical. All the glasses were lifted in the air; but not a word was spoken. The poor woman cried for joy and gratitude.

The generosity of Pierre was appreciated, for every one had his hand in his pocket to give. Encouraged by his success, Pierre commenced to sing another ballad, and this time with such increased assurance and talent that the greatest enthusiasm prevailed; profiting by it, he advanced with hat in hand, and, flushed with happiness, he collected a handsome amount, which he gave to

the poor woman, and slipped out of the brewery without finishing his mug of beer.

As he walked along, he could not conceive how he had had the courage to do as he had done; but his heart answered, "It was right." Robertsau and the brewery were soon forgotten.





CHAPTER VI.

QUR young Pierre every day lost a little of his timidity, and gained greater confidence in himself. Passing, some hours later, before the brewery of the Dauphin, he entered and rested himself, viewing with interest what was going on about him. Presently, a young man of sixteen or eighteen years of age seated himself near Pierre, and commenced to question him; "for," said he, "you are a stranger like myself." At the word "stranger," Pierre protested, and began to speak of his country and his business.

"I am also travelling about," said the stranger, "to make my fortune; but these devils of the custom-house are very troublesome; have you played them any good tricks yet?"

"I do not sell contraband goods."

"You give them an interest in your trade! You are their friend! They will, of course, protect you when they have part of the business."

"I assure you, I sell no contraband goods, and never shall."

"You blame me, then?"

"I have not blamed you; I have only answered your questions."

"It is the only way to make your business profitable; otherwise you will be obliged to travel this country over for twenty years before you can accumulate anything. I vow to you, it is a pleasure for me to cheat these fellows. In the summer, when the hedges are thick, they hide themselves and dart out upon you. Last year I was *tracked* in the Black Forest fourteen days, and forced to abandon one of my packages to keep my liberty. Where are you going?"

"I do not know yet; I ought to return to my village by the middle of March. I feel satisfied to go around in the country."

"Bad business, little profits, and much pain."

"I commence—"

"Well answered, my friend. With the pleasant weather, the ambition grows tall. You are not going to betray me?"

"Have I the appearance of a traitor?"

"Oh! no. Let me pay for your beer."

Pierre refused; he was about going, when the stranger reached out his hand, saying: "You are a brave boy. Now, let me give you a little advice. If you wish to make something that will pay you for the trouble, traverse the Rhine. Going to the watering-places, during the warm season, you will find people there who spend more money in a month than these people at home do in a year. We are truly distracted for these fine people; the only thing is to know what goods to take. Good luck!"

Pierre was astonished; he had never heard such language. This young man seemed honest; and, although he sold contraband goods, he had informed and advised

him how to make more money. If he was to be believed, this was the only way to grow rich.

Pierre was uneasy. As he walked along, he said to himself: "Why should I wish to make a fortune so quickly? I have time enough. I shall gain a little every year. I do not ask more; besides, I have no taste for this ugly business of smuggling. I am sure that I shall never be taken like a bird in the net of the bird-catcher. It is not only because I have not promised the Count and Countess I would not sell contraband goods, but I have promised myself to be always honest; and, if my good star protects me, I shall return with at least one hundred francs, besides seeing much which has improved and benefited me."

Pierre returned to Haute Montée, where he found the hostess waiting for him.

"Pierre, do you know I began to feel very uneasy about you? There are so many people in Strasbourg, and sometimes boys like you are led away by bad acquaintances. Come in and warm yourself."

He was always happy when a good mother testified an interest in him; he felt nearer home. After they went in, Pierre related his adventures, including the conversation at Robertsau.

"See these worthless fellows!" said Madame Knops. "They would like to engage the innocent in fraudulent commerce! I will prophesy for them. They will return home poorer than they left it. Sell smuggled goods, and be chased like a rabbit! This you will not do. However," she said, laughing, "Pierre, suppose some day you should be in the country of laces, think of me, and put three yards of lace in your shoe for friendship."

Pierre laughed. The good Madame Knops quickly changed the conversation. "Well, now, what route are you going to take?"

"I do not know; it is not the season to go out of the country. I have a desire to take the route to Saverne."

During the night, the snow fell in great



“He found it impossible to rise.”

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abundance, and Madame Knöps tried to persuade Pierre to renounce his determination of taking this trip.

"It is impossible," said the little merchant. "I shall sell enough to pay my expenses, and in the stormy season everybody is at home, which makes the wind blow profitably for me. My shoes are excellent; they are new, and I am clothed warm enough to make a tour around the world."

He settled his bills, and started, carrying with him the blessings of the innkeeper.

Pierre left Strasbourg by the Saverne gate, and he found the fears of the hostess were not exaggerated, but the carts that had passed along the road had hardened it. Pierre, followed by his dog Fox, was walking along towards the village of Hausbergen, when he slipped. He felt great pain in his left foot, and, although he was but a short distance from some houses, he found it impossible to rise.

Poor Fox, distressed to see his master in this state, would run a short distance ahead,

then return and caress him, as if to say, "Have patience, some one will come."

In admiring the intelligence of his dog, Pierre felt thankful to Rose for giving him this companion, and he waited patiently for his deliverer. An hour passed in absolute silence; from time to time, the dog would raise his head to listen, but, hearing no foot-steps, would nestle still closer to his master. Poor Pierre made several efforts to get up, but in vain. His pain increased all the time. "Oh!" thought he, "if my good hostess was only here!"

Suddenly, Fox gave a sudden bound, ran down the road, barking, and disappeared. Almost at the same time, Pierre heard voices singing softly. Never had he heard such sweet music. How it rejoiced his heart! The dog returned, overcome with joy, wagged his tail, caressed his master, and seemed to say, "Help is near!"

Just then, a large travelling wagon came in sight. In the centre was raised a sort of throne, on which was seated a young Alsa-

cian girl in her wedding costume, holding in her hand a distaff ornamented with blue and gold ribbons, as an emblem of industry. Her husband and three others formed a circle around her. The wagon held their furniture also, as the young couple had just left the paternal home and were going to establish their own little domicile.

As soon as they saw Pierre sitting in the snow, the singing ceased. "Stop!" said Susanna, "he is wounded." And the bride, light as a bird, flew to the ground, exclaiming:

"What is the matter?"

Pierre replied: "I slipped, and in the effort to save myself, my foot turned, and I feel such a frightful pain in my ankle-bone."

"It is sprained. Quick! my boy, take off your shoes and stockings, I am going to rub it with the snow. I will not fail to use the remedy when it is here."

Pierre moved not.

"Very well. It is necessary to assist you."

“No; but—”

“But what? Do you imagine that we are going to leave you here? Your accident is a good omen for me. Now I shall not be afraid of being scolded,” said Susanna, looking at George mischievously.

Pierre was surrounded with friends. The kind young farmer, without stopping to think of his beautiful wedding skirt of blue embroidered with gold, and his white shirt, began to rub the foot of our traveller. Susanna made a bandage of her handkerchief, and, after dressing the foot, told the men to put him in the wagon. Fox took a place by the side of his master.

Pierre gave them the address of Madame Knops. When the wagon stopped before the Haute Montée, the hostess said to herself, “Here comes a windfall!” Judge of her sad surprise when she saw Pierre. She raised her hands to heaven while listening to Susanna. Even the dog seemed to appreciate the kindness of Madame Knops, and returned thanks by caressing her. She

would have been happy to have kept the newly married couple, but it was impossible.

After receiving the good wishes of the hostess and the thanks of Pierre, the young people started.

Pierre related the particulars of the accident, and Madame Knops, usually so talkative, was silent. She seemed thoughtful; at last, with great effort, she said:

“My dear boy, you are sensible, and you must, of course, understand that it will not be to your interest to stay in this inn. Would you be ashamed to go to the hospital?”

“Ashamed, Madame Knops! Would it be a bad action?”

“I was sure of it. You are not proud, you know that all the world cannot be rich, and our hospitals are a blessing for the poor and unfortunate. But perhaps you will ask why I do not keep you here at my house?”

“Oh! no, Madame Knops, I have always found you kind and good.”

“Very well, my boy, I am going to look after you. Thank God that in our city

there is a resource for all the world ! Our hospital will receive you with open arms. You will have the best care from the Sisters, and a learned physician to attend you. Yes, yes," said Madame Knops, adjusting her mantle and looking for her overshoes, "Strasbourg is a city without comparison. I would not give it for their Paris !"

"All things are for the best." Pierre was taken to the hospital. The dog was left to the care of Madame Knops ; the poor little animal followed his master to the gate of the hospital, but he could not enter, and was obliged to follow the good madame home.

Youth is the season of illusion. The young are not instructed by the unhappiness and misery that are constantly passing before them. Pierre, but a child, had been seized with fright when he saw the body of his father deprived of movement, lifeless, but that was all. He had been happy most of the time since he left his native village, nearly three months since, and he believed it would always be the

same; but his stay at the hospital gave him time for reflection. It was a benefit to him. He remembered the conversation of the young contraband he had met, and he could not understand how the principles of this young man could be united with the cordiality and good feeling he had witnessed. Pierre believed that men were either all good or all bad; he had never felt a wrestling with his conscience to do right.

The surgeon soon found he had sprained his ankle, but told him to keep up good courage, as he thought he would be able to commence his travels in the course of eight or ten days. "But I shall not leave you until you are perfectly well." He then sat down and asked him several questions, and Pierre soon forgot all his troubles when he spoke of home and his native village.

In the afternoon, our little merchant saw a lady coming towards his bed. She had a sad countenance, but so amiable that he felt like knowing her. Without any ceremony, she arranged his pillow, and told him she

had come to keep him company. She entered into conversation with him, and seemed delighted with his ready answers. She went around the room, and spoke to all the unfortunate ones with the same interest. The next day this strange lady returned; she took from her bag oranges, a book, and some bread white as snow. She seemed pleased to see Pierre so contented, and she had been so attentive to him, that he resolved to ask her why she was so good to a poor stranger.

“Madame, if it is not asking too much, I would like to know why it is you come here every day, as regular as the physician, and bring such nice things?”

“Since you have given me your history, my child, it is but just for me to answer your question. I come here because I am unhappy.”

“Unhappy! You, madame, unhappy?”

“Yes. I had an only son who died fifteen years ago. He was my joy, my hope—as you are the joy and comfort of your mother. I had tried in every possible way to forget

my misery and sorrow, but without success, when some one said to me, 'Go visit the poor and sick everywhere, and you will be comforted.' It was true. I am never more happy than when I am here, and this is why I come here every day. In seeing the sufferings of others, I forget my own. Your youth and your good sentiments rejoiced my heart. Now, do you understand my taste for the hospital?"

"I understand that you are very good, madame, and, if my mother could see you at my bedside, she would cry for joy. I was sorry to come to the hospital—not because I was proud, like a great many who would rather die in a corner—but, however—"

"I hope you will take away with you some good ideas of the hospital. You have only to remember the care and kindness you have received from all. Has not the surgeon been attentive? I am sure the Sisters have not neglected the little stranger who came to seek their hospitality."

"And you, madame, have kept me com-

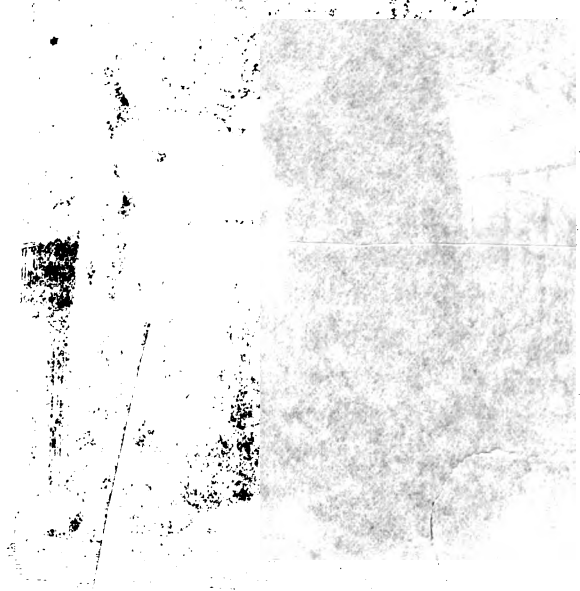
pany. I am so glad that we have these hospitals. What should I have done? It would have cost me all my gains."

"Instead of that, you will find it will be an assistance to you, for I intend to send you to Madame Fritz, who lives in Breuil, and she will buy of you."

Pierre would have liked to have left the hospital the next day, but the surgeon thought it too soon, and he wished him to walk about the yard for a few days to see if his ankle gained strength. The Sisters gave him books to read, and showed him many little attentions.

At last, Madame Knops arrived with her pockets full of delicacies. Pierre ran to embrace her, and she looked so happy to see him up again.

"Now see," said she, "you have had rest, and been here just long enough to have the roads swept clean; there is no more appearance of snow. Your box is in my chamber." And, to finish her idea, she took from her pocket a key and held it up.



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"The Sisters showed him many little attentions."

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One morning, after thoroughly examining the foot of our little traveller, the surgeon declared he could again commence his travels. "You can put this boy out of the house," said he, with a smile, to the Sisters, and, giving him a friendly tap, he went away.

Never was an order received with so much satisfaction. In a quarter of an hour, Pierre had dressed himself, returned his best thanks to the Sisters, and disappeared.

After paying Madame Knops a visit, he bid her good-by, took his box, and, followed by Fox, started for Breuil.

The servant seemed to anticipate this visit, for she smiled when she saw Pierre, and asked him to come in the kitchen and sit down while she went to call her mistress. She soon came in, and asked Pierre into the dining-room. He opened his box, spread out his goods. In vain Madame Fritz begged of him not to trouble himself so much. He arranged them all on the table in perfect order and taste. Madame Fritz made a great many purchases.

The cook and others also bought several articles. When he counted his money, and found that he had twenty-two francs, he seemed overcome by his good fortune. Every time he put his money into his purse, he thought of his mother and the old man's benediction.

Pierre consulted Madame Knops in regard to the route he should take. It was the last of October when he left home; it was now the last of January, and he wished to return by the last of April. His first trip had been a success. He had not failed in his undertaking.

"My child," said Madame Knops, "you had better take the Paris road to Saverne. You will find many beautiful villages and good people; and return to Niederbronn by the same road you came here. It is necessary in your business to make friends and customers; and, if they know that you will return from time to time, they will wait to buy of you."

How can we describe the gratitude that

passed through his soul when he saw he was the object of so much tender interest ! He remembered when he waited patiently on the snow for relief.

He started, and had gone but a few steps, when he turned and gazed some time at the house where he had received so much kindness.





CHAPTER VII.

ALTHOUGH we feel the greatest interest in Madeleine's son, we cannot follow him step by step as he visits each little village, or assist at the sale of his goods. We can say, however, he has entirely recovered from his fall, and walks without pain two or three leagues a day. He has arrived in the valley of Saverne, at the foot of the Vosges. The melting snow has swollen the rivers and the streams.

During a portion of the season, this country is one of the most beautiful in France. Here the grape is carefully cultivated, and far and near this vine may be seen creeping and twining about the trellises, with here and there little villages scattered among the plains, interspersed by little streams and shaded by the willow and poplar.

All this beauty did not exist at the time we rejoin Pierre in the valley of Saverne ; but he regarded with pleasure the picturesque appearance of the next village, where he intended to rest.

He stopped in several places, and, arriving at Hochfelden, he remembered that the bread made here had been celebrated for centuries as being the best in Alsace. Be it imagination or reality, Pierre thought he had never eaten such good bread.

As day succeeded day, the warblings of the birds announced the approach of spring. Pierre pursued his route, feeling less fatigued as his package became lighter and his purse heavier. While Pierre was offering his goods in Vendenheim, his dog, that had followed him so faithfully, disappeared. All search was in vain ; he could not be found. As night was coming on, he was obliged to proceed without his faithful companion.

He was near Brumath, when he met a man whose countenance and appearance were bad. Pierre was suspicious of him,

and thought to himself, "What is the best thing for me to do?" Seeing some houses, he walked rapidly along, hoping to find shelter. The stranger understood his thoughts, and, without a moment's warning, ran up to him, knocked him down, seized him by the throat, and tried to force a handkerchief into his mouth.

The despair he felt seemed to give Pierre energy and strength to prolong the struggle much longer than the thief imagined. The poor boy expected to die. He thought of his mother, of Christine, of his money. "If Fox had been here, with what courage would he have defended me! What misfortune to have lost my companion at the time when he would have been the most useful!" When the thief tried to smother his cries, Pierre bit him; his mouth was filled with blood from this wicked hand; he thought he heard a bone crack, but he kept on biting. His strength was almost exhausted, when a band of children heard his terrible cries. They flew as quick as light-



me!

The first of these is the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, which has been the most influential of the medical journals in the United States. It has been the most influential of the medical journals in the United States. It has been the most influential of the medical journals in the United States.

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 necessary funds to carry out its policy.



"The stranger . . . knocked him down, seized him by the throat."

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ning, and soon returned with a man, whose appearance made the thief fly from his victim.

Pierre owed his life to M. Vincent, the schoolmaster of Brumath, and his pupils. They surrounded him and helped him up. André, the youngest of the boys, ran home for his mother, who soon arrived out of breath with some old linen and a cup of fresh water; for they thought Pierre was seriously injured. Happily, he had only some hard bruises. Supported by M. Vincent and the mother of André, he arrived at the school, where he met with the most cordial hospitality. Pierre asked for his purse. "The money," said he to M. Vincent, "is for my mother and sister."

It was fortunate the thief did not find his purse, and Pierre asked M. Vincent if he would put it in his drawer.

André's mother would not leave him until she saw him in a little bed white as snow. She said, before leaving him, "This is nothing serious, but I would leave off

this business; for, believe me, it is too dangerous."

Pierre did not think so. He believed in the protection of Providence, and this last escape fully confirmed his belief, and was proof of protection in the future. But as he will be obliged to remain at the house of M. Vincent for a few days, we must introduce this good man to our readers.

For thirty years M. Vincent had been the schoolmaster of Brumath. He was a man of firm, decided character, but always gentle and amiable. His mission was not limited to teaching reading, writing, orthography, and the four rules, but he saw in the boys the future Alsatians whose characters could be moulded for good or bad influence on their country. M. Vincent spared no trouble to gain the hearts of his pupils. He played with the little ones, conversed with the older ones. He was consulted about the business they should engage in, and often, times in the selection of a wife. Every Sunday evening they had a reunion at the

house of the schoolmaster. There they discussed everything. Often the master would captivate them by his interesting descriptions. On great days they were all treated to a mug of beer. In the summer these reunions were held under the shade of the linden-trees.

Pierre could not get tired in such good company. M. Vincent had very quickly made acquaintance with our little protégé, who gave him an account of his youth and the trials he had passed through.

The old man took great interest in hearing him talk, and regretted that he could not keep a boy of so much intelligence and instruct him, so in time he might become an accomplished man. How he admired his energy and industry!

"A child," said he, "but fourteen years of age, to choose a business full of difficulties and dangers!"

"You see," said Pierre, "I will be the support of my mother and sister. It is my duty. My poor mother has worked so

hard to bring us up. Very often I have heard her cry all night. I would have cried also, but I said to myself: I will go to sleep quickly, then I will grow big, and strong enough to work also. Oh! no, I would not give up my business. I will eat my black bread first, and then it will not be black long."

The new friend of Pierre entered into his sentiments. He hoped Madeleine would not hear of the dangers he had passed through. He learned that the name of the victim was unknown. The travelling merchants are numerous, and they thought perhaps this affair would pass unnoticed at Niederbronn, and, for fear his mother would be uneasy about him, he wrote her a letter, as he was in the habit of doing from time to time.

In youth, the wounds of the body and the heart are soon forgotten. When Pierre was alone with the good schoolmaster, he told of his projects and asked his advice. M. Vincent would not have chosen such an adven-

turous life for a boy like Pierre; however, he could not help admiring the reasons of the generous boy.

"I shall return to my village," said Pierre, "to my mother and sister. I am waiting. They count the days. This will be the first time those beautiful crowns will enter the drawer in our closet. Fear nothing, my dear friend, I shall arrive safe and sound. All men are not wicked. I have found in my travels more benevolence than bad will. I must start to-morrow."

The old schoolmaster looked at him with admiration. "Hope," said he, laying his hand on the head of his young friend. "God bless your courage and confidence. No," added he, sighing, "all men are not wicked; only those who do not fear God."





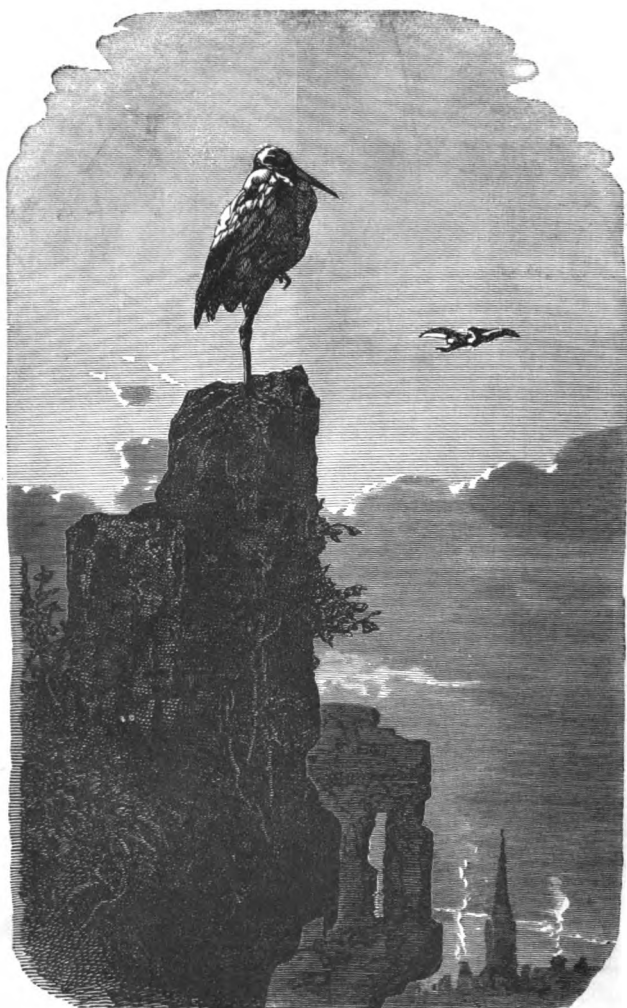
CHAPTER VIII.

HE arose early the next morning, embraced his generous host, thanked him again and again for his kindness, took some provisions which had been prepared for him, and started. His package being light made his walk easier, although he had perfectly recovered from the violent shock he received.

It was April, and at this season of the year it was cold in Alsace; but vegetation was quite green. The air was pure; the birds had commenced to build and return to their nests; everything about looked beautiful; and as Pierre walked slowly along towards Strasbourg (where the schoolmaster had advised him to return), his heart rejoiced at the approach of spring.

He felt the joy of childhood at the sight





"Yes," said the child; "how can the fellow stand on one foot?"

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on a stork's nest perch in a corner of the barn
eaten. He knew the beautiful reason was
not far off. When he was little, his mother
had told him many curious stories about the
birds and as he walked along, he had seen
and everything. "Yes," thought he, "it
is a good sign to see them return to their
nests: it proves their fidelity. It is said that
they build their nests with pieces of yew-
wood without doubt because it is more solid."

As Pierre talked to himself, he met a boy
about ten years of age, who had stopped
and was gazing, with mouth wide open, at a
stork perched **on** one foot. As this was
a good opportunity to speak of the storks he
loved so much, Pierre asked, "Are you
looking at that bird up there, little one?"

"Yes," said the child, "how can the bird
low stand on one foot?"

"My little friend," replied Pierre, "you
must speak with more respect of these
storks. If you could be taken up there, you
would see, no doubt, livers, frogs, little fish,
everything to feed the little ones. Little

birds are very good mothers. They are very
careful of their children. They are very



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of a stork's nest perched on the top of some old ruins. He knew the beautiful season was not far off. When he was little, his mother had told him many curious things about the storks, and as he walked along he remembered everything. "Yes," thought he, "it is a good sign to see them return to their nests; it proves their fidelity. It is said that they build their nests with pieces of wood, without doubt because it is more solid."

As Pierre talked to himself, he met a boy about ten years of age, who had stopped, and was gazing, with mouth wide open, at a stork perched on one foot. As this was a good opportunity to speak of the storks he loved so much, Pierre asked, "Are you looking at that bird up there, little one?"

"Yes," said the child; "how can the fellow stand on one foot?"

"My little friend," replied Pierre, "you must speak with more respect of these storks. If you could be taken up there, you would see, no doubt, lizards, frogs, little fish, everything to feed the little ones. I think

that is the father, who guards the nest while the mother is away; for these birds never both leave their nest at the same time. They are great travellers; when they feel the cold north wind blow, they assemble in council, and then all fly away together."

"Where do they go?"

"Very far from here; to Asia, to Africa; but you don't know anything about those countries."

"Oh! I have seen it on the globe at school, and then I have a cousin in Africa."

"Very well; you are a good boy, who remembers and profits by the lessons of your teacher."

"Will those birds bite? Are they wicked?"

"No, not at all! There are in the park of M. le Comte, at home, some of these birds, who walk about catching insects, and also play with the children. My mother told me of one who would play hide-and-go-seek, and knew when she was touched that it was her turn to catch the others."

Pierre had not forgotten the tenderness and respect for their parents that are attributed to the storks. "Those birds up there," he continued, "set an example for some people. When their parents are old or sick, the younger ones bring them all their food; is not that beautiful?"

The little boy was of the same opinion, but he would have been more surprised, if Pierre had added that they have been known to remain in their nests, and be burned to death, rather than leave their young.

By this time they had arrived at the place where they must separate, so they bade each other adieu.

The few articles that remained in his box were quickly sold, and our little merchant arrived in the city with a full purse.

Pierre wished to avoid speaking of his adventure, and on this account he did not go to the Haute Montée. Having made his purchases, he would return to Niederbronn by the same road he had taken to come to

Strasbourg. It was not exactly the route Pierre would have taken, but he said, "M. Vincent told me, and I am willing to take his advice."

He hastened to make his purchases. Everywhere he was well received. The merchants had confidence and took an interest in him. All congratulated him on his success. "Go on, Pierre, as you have commenced," said the ribbon-merchant to him, "and one of these days you will become the richest merchant in Niederbronn. I tell you I know it."

Pierre smiled at these kind words, took leave of the kind merchant, and continued his route. He saw again the Hospital, the Brewery, and, above all, the Cathedral, and he had the greatest desire to see the great clock once more in motion, but he was deprived of this pleasure. He felt he was no more a stranger, as he entered the different villages, and was greeted with the cordial "Good-day!" "Oh! is it you? It is useless to ask you if you have done well.

Something told me you would soon be here. Last week, there was a pedlar here who wished us to buy; I refused. When we know our people, we are faithful to them; and, besides, those things you sold me are better than I ever bought of any of them. It will soon be pleasant weather. I have a good mind to buy a pretty linen collar for my Catharine."

Everywhere Pierre received the same welcome. He did not pass the castle where he spent his Christmas and figured so largely on the Christmas-tree, and on entering he experienced kindness on the part of both mistress and servants. Bridgett, who always read the paper aloud in the kitchen, had trembled when reading the sad adventure which had happened to a little travelling merchant: "But, thank God, it was not you, Pierre, they have assassinated," said the good Bridgett; "and I hope nothing of the kind will happen to you."

The kind remembrances he met with along the road lightened his burden. What

a pleasure it was to him to hear them say, "Oh! Pierre, is it you?" The thousand questions that each one asked proved the interest they felt in his success. But one thing gave him the greatest satisfaction; this was the surprise and gratitude expressed by the poor girl for whom he bought the mourning cape.

"What! did you think of me?" said she, unfolding the cape; "and this beautiful ribbon embroidered in silver! Why! you must take me for a rich heiress."

"It is only a remnant; a good chance which I am willing you should profit by," answered Pierre, as he remembered the kindness of the rich merchant, who sold him many things at cost price. He neglected no occasion to sell, but his thoughts preceded him, and were at Niederbronn; he felt he could travel day and night, if it would not injure his health, and, after arriving at Marienthal, the rest of the way would be to him but a continued source of joy.

As he knelt with clasped hands before the

Holy Sanctuary, a profound sentiment of gratitude filled his breast. All the events of the past six months passed before him. He thought of his mother, his sister, his little treasure, and returned thanks for all he enjoyed and possessed. The exercise he had taken had developed him, and gave him a step and appearance more firm and resolute. Some looked at him with surprise and hardly recognized him, but at the first word or smile the brave boy was known.

With what joy he traversed Walburg! Arriving at the house of Rose, he rapped on the window; it was a great surprise, and he was well received. "Oh!" said she, "your mother was here, the other day; she is the one that will be happy to see you; but sit down, Pierre; there is yet something for supper."

Pierre again accepted their hospitality.

The husband, wife, and children gathered around him, all ready to serve him. They asked him so many questions he had no chance to answer them. He told his friends

he had lost Fox, but he did not mention the sad encounter which kept him at the school-master's.

After having declared that she had not traded a cent with any passing merchant, Rose examined everything that remained in the box of Pierre. She made some purchases, which amounted to about two hundred francs.

Pierre could not sleep: as soon as he closed his eyes he was in Wasembourg—and would start in surprise, thinking he was embracing his mother and Christine.

At daybreak he set out, although the good Rose made many efforts to keep him.

It was three weeks since he started to return, and the woods, at that time stripped of their leaves, had now a perfume that made Pierre stop to inhale it. The daisies that he had so often crushed under his feet seemed like so many wonderful things. He listened to the noise of the wind through the trees; he looked at the little streams gliding along, and stirred up the pebbles with the

end of his stick, delighted to see them glitter at the bottom of the water.

He soon stopped, and took a mirror from his box and made his toilet, for he was going to see the Count and Countess at the castle. Pierre compared his present feelings with those he had experienced when he went to the Count with his projects. Oh! how different. Now he is going to acquit himself of part of his debt. And the rest? What things he would buy with this treasure!

Pierre felt no more anxiety about the purchase of goods. The merchants of Strasbourg had said to him, "We will let you have all the goods you wish, and pay when you can; we will not be uneasy about the money, for we know you are an honest boy."

Our young traveller found himself before the castle. His heart beat faster, and, although so happy, he felt timid.

As soon as Hans, the guard, saw him, he uttered a cry of joy. He looked at him, asked all sorts of questions, and knew by

his smiling face he had succeeded in his undertaking.

At last he is in the castle. He received such a cordial welcome his embarrassment soon disappeared. The poor boy did not understand why his arrival caused so much pleasure; for he did not know that the charity of the rich is a true joy to the heart. What questions! what descriptions! what projects! Pierre did not wait to be asked for his book of receipts and expenses, but presented it to his benefactors.

The Count and his wife were astonished when they examined this book, and found how perfectly it had been kept.

"Pierre, I am satisfied!" exclaimed the Count—"perfectly satisfied with you! It was a happy inspiration you received. It will be necessary to continue, and, if you persist in this good way, we will establish you some day at Niederbronn. But listen: I wish you to spend enough to live well. There is no economy in saving so much that you compromise your health."

The Count, who loved to listen to the interesting stories of Pierre, would have detained our young friend, if the Countess had not reminded him that his pleasure of listening retarded the happiness of Madeleine.

The quarter of a mile which separated Pierre from home seemed such a long distance he was impatient at the least detention. How many things were passing in his mind ! He heard some one say "Good-day !" He looked up, and saw a boy who in other days he would have passed indifferently, but at this moment he remembered that he lived in the village near his mother, and this was enough. He trembled with joy at seeing him. He asked him everything: the news was good. He quickened his pace, and was soon at the end of his journey.





CHAPTER IX.

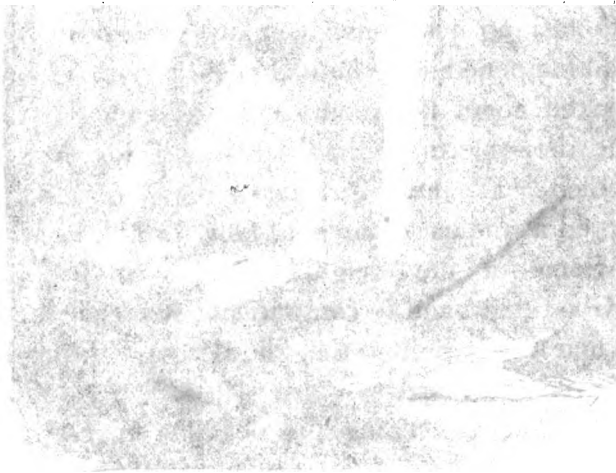
THE valley of Niederbronn, encased as it is by the mountains, makes the temperature cool. The cottage doors are not thrown open to the first rays of the sun, and the evenings are spent at the warm fire-side.

However, at the moment of Pierre's arrival, the cottage window was open, and a little girl, whom he soon saw was Christine, was mounted in a chair, washing the windows. Pierre stood some time admiring the little housekeeper. As he advanced, he saw his mother sitting by the fire. He approached the window, and blew his breath against the glass. Christine screamed with joy, flew like a bird, ran out, and threw herself into the arms of her brother. Pierre entered, carrying his sister, but he imme-



"Put her down to embrace his dear mother."

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"Put her down to embrace his dear mother."

Page 117.

diately put her down to embrace his dear mother, who was almost overcome with this joyous surprise. Not only was the window closed, but the door also.

When the son of Constant Winkel, of whom we have spoken at the commencement of this story, returned from New York, his descriptions were certainly more curious, but the interest with which Madeleine listened to her son was greater. He had been away six months, and his adventure equalled those which Winkel had experienced.

Pierre himself thought he should never stop asking questions about everything that had happened since he had been away. He looked about the room, and was happy to see the objects he had left—Christine included. The little girl had grown, and felt proud at the astonishment of her brother.

Some of the neighbors came to say "Good-day," and to congratulate Madeleine. When they saw him, they did not say "little Pierre," but Pierre.

That same evening the box was opened,

and the presents distributed: a shawl for Madeleine, a rose-colored cape for Christine; then, again, a little silver and ebony knitting-sheath, with a band of gold on each end.

There are rare moments in our lives when we would not be interrupted in our thoughts. Christine's manner expressed this sentiment when their mother, also as happy, but more wise than her children, told them it was time to seek repose.

Pierre had seen something of the country, and, as we have said, had found a good bed at Haute Montée; but when he saw his own little bed in the corner, the pictures he had left on the wall ornamented with the same branches, he felt that these were the pleasures he had been deprived of since his departure; and in the morning, when he heard the singing of the larks, and saw the sun playing, as it were, through the fog, hiding behind the clouds and then again illuminating the whole valley, he asked himself, "How could I have stayed away from home

for six months?" But, when he saw the pleasure his mother experienced at the sight of the gold and silver pieces he laid on the table, he quickly changed his opinion, for he felt he had chosen the better part, and it was necessary he should have courage and perseverance.

He commenced the day by going to see the priest and the schoolmaster. Both of them were pleased to know Pierre had followed their advice, and they never tired listening to the recitals of his travels. We know how well he had kept the secret of the adventure and his sojourn at the house of M. Vincent. His discretion showed strength of character very rare; for we all love to talk frequently of the dangers we pass through, and the account of them is very often exaggerated. Pierre would not have been sorry to have seen his friends shudder as he told them of the perils he had encountered; for it would have been a sweet satisfaction to have known he was the object of so much care; but he knew his mother

would renounce everything sooner than expose the life of her son.

Without delay, young Lipp returned to the chateau, carrying all his money in his strong leather purse. He did not know how the Count intended to arrange business; but he knew he would be well treated.

The walk from Niederbronn to the chateau was delightful. Pierre breathed freely, and often took off his cap to feel the fresh air better; "and then," thought he, "I will return to the cottage; there I shall find a simple dinner a thousand times preferable to that at the hotel, and I shall be seated between my mother and my sister."

As these agreeable thoughts passed through his mind, he was astonished to find the road to the chateau so short.

The Count assisted in the settlement, for he mistrusted the generosity of the Countess.

The profits amounted to one hundred and fifty francs. The Count fixed his portion at thirty francs, which left Pierre one hundred and twenty.

Dear reader, do not say, what a little ; no, do not say this : if you do, you are ignorant of the value of money earned. With half of this, Madeleine would do wonders. The garden should be planted and sown in such a manner as to be productive ; Pierre's wardrobe should be replenished ; many articles they had needed in the house to lighten household duties should be bought ; Christine would also be benefited by her brother's fortune ; and then they would have a little in reserve.

The widow Lipp was no more the object of indifferent compassion ; her son had changed everything ; and men of experience said that with such courage as Pierre had, there was no such word as "fail."

Pierre was busy every day with the cares of the household. He would dig and weed ; go to the forest for wood, and would return with an enormous bundle on his shoulders. He would not permit his mother to do anything that was not pleasant and easy ; for, although still young, she was not strong.

The valley was soon clothed in all its splendor. Sometimes Pierre was lost in thought before so much beauty. The happy mother would have kept the time from passing so quickly. Christine assisted her brother; she went with him to the woods, and listened attentively when he told her about the wonderful things he had seen at Strasbourg, and promised he would take her some day to see the Cathedral.

On Sunday, the young girl put on her rose-colored cape, and tied on her bonnet with the gold and green ribbon, bought for her under the grand arcades. There never were people more happy.

Madeleine's happiness consisted not in the possession of the hundred francs, but she felt proud of being supported by her son—of being indebted to him for better days, often having known so many sad ones; and she felt that Christine would have a protector if she should die; and also she was sure of to-morrow's bread—of having a little money, when she had been deprived of it so

long, and to be able to give a little in charity to those who were poorer than herself.

Brave Pierre has seen all this, and it rejoices his heart, and in a short time he will again start on his route—the grand projects which he entertains shall be kept a secret!

This year was an abundant one. Hay, rape-seed, and wheat filled the barns and granaries of the peasants. In the roads and orchards, joyous bands of children could be heard singing while they gathered cherries, with which the trees were overloaded. Without doubt, Pierre had seen the same thing often, but never had he felt so proud of his own Alsace—never had the perfume of the valley seemed so sweet, and the thought of departure made him feel sad.

America, with its grand speculations, was no temptation to our little pedlar. He felt contented to go, return, work awhile, start out again; this was the sweetest and most beautiful career for our courageous Pierre, now become the head of the family.

We are always happy to see him re-enter the village and return to the parental roof. Sweet parental roof—you are the safeguard of our morals and nourishment of our hearts! Here Pierre renewed and was strengthened in his good sentiments. He was an example of a good son, devoted to the support of his mother, and at an age when boys often cause sacrifices to be made for them.

Week succeeded week. On Sundays, the brother and sister would promenade together; they went to the woods, so pleasant, it reminded them of the days of their infancy, when they made bouquets of the sweet-brier and gathered wild berries. The responsibility that Pierre had assumed inspired his sister with a certain respect for him, whom she regarded almost like a father; and she certainly was right. Was she not the object of his thoughts? How often, when he met with obstacles on the road, did her sweet face appear to him and reassure him! He was ignorant of all that has been said of the

beauty of fraternal love, but the goodness of his heart and the natural elevation of his sentiments had made him a model brother. This young peasant fulfilled one of the greatest duties of man. This reminds me of the beautiful ideas of Silvio Pellico, who says :

“The intimacy of the fireside ought never to make us forget to be polite to our brothers. Be, then, more tender with your sisters. Their sex is endowed with a powerful grace. It is a celestial gift, which they habitually use to diffuse serenity in the household, to banish bad humor, to moderate reproaches that they sometimes hear fall from the lips of father and mother. Honor is the saving charm of woman. Rejoice in the charm she exercises over your soul to soften it; and, since nature has made them weaker and more sensitive than you, be careful to be attentive, console them in their afflictions, do not annoy them yourselves, but constantly prove your respect and love.

“Those who contract the habit of treating

their brothers and sisters with malevolence, ill-will, and rudeness, will entertain the same feeling toward all the world. This family relation should, above all others, be most beautiful, tender, holy. Then, when man passes over the threshold of home, he carries in his relations with the rest of society this need of esteem and tender affection, and faith in virtue, which always produces the daily exercise of elevated sentiments and character."

Pierre could not help feeling a certain pride when in company with other peasants. He walked in the park at Reichshoffen with his mother and sister, and saw them neatly and cleanly dressed, and this—thanks to the success of his little undertaking—was to him a pleasure that only those understand who contribute by their work to the well-being of those they love. Even Christine's new shoes attracted his attention. "Oh!" thought he, "how I will run over the roads, endure all hardships, economize with a happy heart, to double my capital!"

The summer passed quickly. Already the September sun cast its long shadows on the meadows. Pierre was becoming serious. He walked alone, and would pass hours in admiring the forests and meadows, just ready to appear in a new dress. Only a few weeks, and he would have to part. He desired it, he wished it, and yet he was sad.

Madeleine saw all that was passing in the heart of her son. She put his little wardrobe in complete order, all the while trying to smother the idea of departure; she also felt, without doubt, a sentiment of pride when she compared Pierre to other boys of his age. The future seemed so beautiful.

It was the last of September when Pierre received a letter from M. Vincent, saying that the trial of the miserable assassin was coming off, and his attendance would be necessary.

Pierre went to the chateau, where he received more advice and new marks of affection. The Countess gave him some commissions, and advanced him the money.

This time, young Lipp would take the stage and ride directly to Strasbourg.

His mother and sister accompanied him to the place where he would meet the stage, which they perceived was coming in a cloud of dust.

The last embraces were given and received. Pierre climbed slowly to the top, the driver whipped his horses, and he was gone. The widow and her daughter stood in the same place, answering as long as possible the signs of love and farewell of our young traveller.





CHAPTER X.

WE will not hesitate to say to our readers that, although Pierre was seated on the top of a wretched "diligence," among bags of potatoes and plums, he felt himself of some importance; for he was not the poor young pedlar travelling along with stick in hand. And who shall say that in the coming year he will not return in his own wagon, if he has good luck?

Without losing sight of the beautiful landscape, our traveller made notes of this and that, calculated his expenditures and profits, and decided he would accept of some credit, which many of the great merchants of the cities had offered him.

The innkeeper of the Haute Montée received him as a son, and insisted that the

first meal taken at her house should be that of hospitality.

Little Pierre was becoming a beautiful young man ; large, strong, and dignified in his manner—only his countenance retained the expression of boyishness.

He had no time to lose. The trial which had hastened his departure was coming on, and it was thought young Lipp ought to recognize the assassin ; but justice is slow in her arrests because she is prudent, and Pierre passed all the month of October at Strasbourg.

In November, he started for Brumath. On no account would he have failed to visit the good schoolmaster. He renewed his merchandise, and by the month of April he had passed over his route, and arrived at Saverne. Everywhere he was welcome. An incident that we cannot regret detained him eight days at the house of his friend M. Vincent. The snow had fallen so heavily in January it was thought imprudent to proceed, and the week spent there was not lost time. At this age,



"M. Vincent approved of this project."

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advice is given, which is to be followed to and attended. At the same time, a young guest (whom he had known as a merchant) in his leisure hours gave interesting lessons in orthography, grammar, etc.; in the evening the conversation was instructive, serious, and in general of a high order.

Pierre told his friend of the plan which he had decided upon one day to visit the town of Grossenwald; and this was to pass the Bridge of Kehl, and see something of the fashionable world during the watering season. M. Vincent approved of this project, and drew him a map of the route, which he considered perfect. It pleased him to think that his pupil would see the great road that in his younger days he had travelled over. He gave him a small book of the Black Forest, and when he was charmed with it, he said to himself, "But this is not the best of the Rhine." He then took out of his pocket a small book of the Rhine.

However,

or



advice is precious, when we know it is listened to and accepted. M. Vincent gave to his young guest (whom he considered as a future merchant) in his leisure moments some interesting lessons in orthography, arithmetic, etc.; in the evening the conversation was instructive, serious, and in turn lively.

Pierre told his friend of the grand project he had decided upon one day in the forest of Grossenwald; and this was to pass the Bridge of Kehl, and see something of the fashionable world during the watering season. M. Vincent approved of this project, and drew him a map of the route, which he considered perfect. It pleased the old man to think that his pupil would follow the same road that in his younger days he had travelled over. He gave him a poetic description of the Black Forest, and although Pierre was charmed with all he said, he thought to himself, "But the trees, the rocks, the view of the Rhine, all this will not put money in my pockets."

However, his patience was well paid, for

when he asked about the cities he would find on his way, the schoolmaster forgot nothing that would interest his guest, either in business or sight-seeing; he also gave him the names of several honest persons who would aid him if necessary.

I am sure the reader feels satisfied in seeing the little traveller instructed by his good friend, and enjoys a certain pleasure when he sees him start again for Strasbourg to make his purchases and commence his important trip. The contents of his box were not the same. In place of the coarse woolen goods, he carefully selected the fine linens of Alsace, plain and embroidered muslins, brushes and combs, chains, buckles, brooches, ear-rings, steel pins of all kinds, specialties of Strasbourg.

Pierre felt some pride when he saw his room filled with so many different articles; for his success was the result of his perseverance, which he was determined to have always. He hoped to establish himself some day at Niederbronn, when the mineral

waters should begin to attract strangers ; and then his mother and Christine would be truly protected. He found he could not return home as soon as they expected him, and it was necessary to write to his mother. He gave her a description of the importance of this undertaking, not only to convince her, but to convince and encourage himself. He put the letter in the office, hoping he would receive no answer.

He left the city by the Austerlitz gate, traversed the Little Rhine, stopped before the Isle of Epis ; he saw the mausoleum of General Desaix, passed over the Rhine on the bridge of boats, which excited his admiration and surprise, and arrived at Kehl. Although it was not Sunday, a great number of people were resting in the gardens, and looked satisfied that winter was over.

The custom-house officers soon put a stop to Pierre's reverie ; he was obliged to take his articles, one by one, from his box, give the cost, and pay his duty.

Pierre thought it a great injustice, and declared, if he were emperor or king, he would never trouble those who entered his states. But he soon recovered his spirits at the sight of the verdure, and the trees clothed in all the beauty of their new apparel. In perceiving so many beautiful villages scattered about the plains, our happy traveller thought, "Here I shall do a good business," and took new courage. To his great surprise, he sold some chains and earrings to the young girls in the suburbs of Kehl, whose elegant costumes made him think of his sister.

The work of the fields does not call women outside; but Pierre found some customers. He exhibited his merchandise, when they would permit him, and did not complain of the trouble, for there was not a day passed that he did not make a good profit.

Pierre became a tourist without ceasing to be a pedlar. M. Vincent would have been truly happy if he could have seen him stop

to admire a pretty village, illuminated by the setting sun, or seen him climbing a mountain to have a better view of the country, whose beauties recompensed him for the fatigue.

The season now seemed favorable for traders. Baden, the city spoken of so highly by his old friend, would soon be filled with strangers, and although Pierre had nothing to offer the fashionable world, he passed the time in visiting, which was not lost.

He advanced rapidly towards Offenbourg. He arrived by the Black Forest at Gernsbach, and after a few days he entered Baden.

Poor Pierre thought he was dreaming when he saw the beautiful gardens on every side, filled with flowers, and a crowd of people promenading who looked as if they had nothing else to do; he had never seen such elegant toilets. Instead of going to the hotel, he walked along the grand street, and stopped, almost stupefied, before a large

house with columns, on which he read "Conversation." This word puzzled him. "If M. Vincent was here, he would tell me what this means."

He was drawn from his reflections by the sounds of music; he stood rooted to the spot, forgetting the heavy weight on his shoulders, until some one reminded him of it.

At the hotel where he entered, he did not receive the sympathy he had witnessed at the Haute Montée. At Baden they speculate on all strangers; for the watering season makes the fortune of the inhabitants, and they deal rigorously with travellers, no matter what their condition may be.

Pierre had good sense: "for," said he, "my expenses must be in proportion to my profits." He took his supper, and then slept until morning.

Before taking his box upon his shoulders, he thought he would take a walk for his own amusement; and he was more astonished than the evening before, when he saw the church, the castle built above the old city,

the hotels and beautiful monuments of the new city, the promenade called the Graben, under which a torrent rushes which empties in the river.

The humble young Pierre felt astonished at himself among the fashionable world. He advanced timidly in the new city, and did not go to the public parlors, only to the attendants of the visitors. Arriving at the beautiful street that leads to Lichten-thal, he felt disappointed when he saw the stores filled with objects of luxury—everything so elegant, so much superior to the articles contained in his box, that he stopped as if petrified. He looked with an envious eye at the carvings in wood from the Black Forest; the playthings for children, the Bohemian glass, the boxes, the corals, etc.

After this surprise was over, he said :

“There is but one thing for me to do: it is not possible for me to have a shop, but I can supply myself with the articles that are sold here, and carry them into the city and in

the public walks. I shall sell a little if the others sell so much; that is all I can do. But why did not M. Vincent say something of this? He took his memorandum book from his pocket, and found a note in which his old friend advised him to procure a few of the articles sold at Baden, without risking too much.

Affected by this remembrance, Pierre did not deliberate long; he inquired where he should find the house to purchase, and the next day he politely offered them with his other articles to the public. Soon he stopped at the hotels, and rapped at the doors of the apartments. Sometimes he was ordered out as an intruder, at other times his good looks inspired an interest in him, and they would permit him to show his goods, and enter into conversation with him.

"Of what country are you?"

"Alsace."

"We like Alsace and its inhabitants very much." These compliments were often

accompanied with many pieces of money, that Pierre put in his purse. Encouraged by such results, he resolved to stay at Baden as long as his business was good. It was not long before he was known by the name of "The Alsacian," and all wished him well.

On Sundays, he went out like a gentleman; he strolled to the springs, and amused himself by looking at the ladies and gentlemen drink the water. At the end of three weeks, he knew all the country, and could have offered himself as a guide to strangers. He left Baden two months later.

The little merchant had renewed his box many times; he had fulfilled his indebtedness, settled all his accounts—several gold pieces were the reward of his industry. Satisfied with such a result, Madeleine's son did not hesitate to consecrate one piece of twenty francs to the remembrance of his successful travels. He bought a beautiful glass for his mother, and a pretty Swiss cottage for his sister; he thought that the sight of

these articles in wood would be to him an encouragement to work. He re-entered his hotel with these two objects of art. With what care would he pack them !

It was the month of August ; and notwithstanding the crowd of visitors, Pierre intended to leave Baden ; for nothing would have induced him to have passed one of the places mentioned in his chart.

One Sunday evening, as he was returning from the cascade of Geraldsau, his favorite walk, he saw a merchant with whom he had had commercial relations enter "La Maison de Conversation" ; he followed him, and was surprised to find a beautiful parlor, filled with ladies and gentlemen, all sitting around a large table covered with a green cloth. Some gold pieces were lying about on each side of the table, and every five minutes some one of the company would rake up all the gold, with the exception of a few pieces, which they left on the table ; they put it in their pockets, and always more than they left.

Pierre then remembered the story that one of the boys at the hotel had told him.

A young man, having entered from curiosity into the "gambling-room," had risked one hundred francs, and in one night he gained one hundred thousand; then he left the next day.

Dazzled by so much gold, he was going out, when the merchant who had entered before him threw a twenty-franc piece on the table, and immediately picked up ten more; he repeated it ten times, and always with the same success. This was too much! Pierre threw a twenty-franc piece on the table, and, red with emotion, reached out his hand (that he believed would be filled), when he saw his and all the rest disappear. He stepped back: the noise of his shoes seemed to annoy the company, and they did not hesitate to make known their dissatisfaction.

The unhappy Pierre returned to the hotel—threw himself on his bed; he breathed painfully, like a man who had done something beyond his strength. He got up, walked

about his room, threw himself again on his bed, as if exhausted from fatigue. He tried to sleep, if only for an hour; but in vain! He had never experienced such torments.

The next day, as soon as the gates were open, he entered the forest, and did not stop only at Eberstein. The solitude and beauty of the country made a pleasing impression on him; he felt less unhappy after he had had a good cry; but these thoughts would constantly return to him: "I have played! I have lost twenty francs! M. Vincent—did he not make me promise I would not enter a gambling-room? I have forfeited my word! Twenty francs!—how many useful things could I have bought for the house!"





Picture in sorrow.

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CHAPTER XI.

THE sun shone brilliantly ; the woods seemed embalmed in perfume ; and the promenaders were already out. Pierre did not move. He was drawn from his reverie by the appearance of a young girl in company with her brother. They looked at Pierre several times, passed by, but soon returned. The young girl approached Pierre and said :

“ Are you sick ? ”

“ No, mademoiselle ; you are very kind.”

“ Perhaps you do not know the way to Baden ? ” said the young man.

“ Oh ! yes, sir. I could conduct you to every place within six miles.”

They went on ; but the young girl returned again, and said :

“ I should like to know what is the matter

with you. You had certainly been crying when we passed by. I do not like to see any one cry."

"I presume if you knew, you would think it a very little thing to be unhappy about," said Pierre.

"It is but just that you tell me."

"Well," said Pierre, "I have lost twenty francs by my own fault; but it is a great loss for a poor merchant like me."

"To cry for twenty francs! If you will come to our hotel, my father will give you twenty francs."

"I thank you, mademoiselle; I ought to feel this loss."

"Ah! you are proud. Come, will you?" She disappeared.

The promenaders were becoming so numerous Pierre knew it was no place for him, and he returned to his hotel by the longest road. He looked at the glass and cottage with tears in his eyes, as he packed them up with other things to get ready to take his departure. He had a small account to set-

tle with a merchant of the Black Forest, also some articles to take, then he would leave."

He was walking rapidly along the street when he felt a hand laid on his shoulders. Turning round, Pierre exclaimed, "The Count and Countess!"

"Well, Mr. Pierre, do you think that no one comes to Baden-Baden but yourself? Why, you look as if you were sorry to see us."

"Ah! sir."

"I am going this moment to Trinkhalle, and will be at the Court of Baden in two hours. I wish to talk to you."

They left him. If Pierre had been able to have made any allusion to the fault that he had committed when he met his friends, it would have relieved his conscience. He felt the blood mount to his face, and immediately the struggle with himself began. Should he tell him he had played? He was not obliged to; but was it right to hide a fault of this kind from such benefactors as the Count and Countess? In his embarrassment, he knew not where he went; he did

not settle his account with the merchant. He counted the hours, and soon the minutes. In his trouble, the poor boy arrived before the hotel of the Court of Baden; he went slowly and sadly up a magnificent stairway, and soon came to the door where they had directed him.

"Why, here he is," said the Count. "Come in, Pierre, and give us an account of your travels."

This invitation soothed him for a few minutes. He entered into all the details of his travels, talked a long time of the good M. Vincent, and showed his account-book in perfect order. The Count was happy and satisfied.

"This is an unexpected result, my friend: God has blessed your courage, your devotedness to your mother and sister. I have some projects for the future that I shall make known to you at a proper time; but although your cheeks are like roses, you do not appear as well as usual. If you are in debt, I am ready to assist you."

"Sir, there is no necessity of questioning me. I am resolved to inform you of my unhappiness before I leave here. I am in despair."

"See here—a word like that, Pierre, should never fall from the lips of an honest boy like you. Come, speak; do not keep me in suspense; and—my wife has almost fainted."

"Sir, notwithstanding the good counsels and advice of my respected friend, M. Vincent, I have been imprudent enough to enter the gambling-room."

"I was sure of it!" exclaimed the Countess.

Pierre continued :

"A merchant with whom I had traded played and won, and I thought I should win also. In two minutes, sir, I lost twenty francs. I am unhappy—I am miserable!"

"You did very wrong to enter this gambling-room; but I am glad you have lost. The misfortune of gambling is to gain. If in place of losing twenty francs you had

gained the same, I should have been discouraged. You will remember all your life the fault you have committed. There are some misfortunes that prove themselves blessings; and I am not sorry that you have learned to know this. Until now you have been an exemplary boy; and who knows but you have had too much prosperity?"

"I do not know, sir; but I am very much troubled at having made such a mistake. Me to have played, and dared to have placed myself beside those beautiful ladies and gentlemen, and throw my money on the green cloth! Oh! if those who won it only knew the pain it has cost me, and, above all, the happiness I should have had in giving it to my mother, I am sure they would return it to me."

"You are mistaken, my poor boy; all money is the same to the gambler. The love of play extinguishes in man's heart the most noble sentiments. You have seen with what avidity those who win grasp their gain."

“You can readily imagine, sir, that when I saw them raking this cloth as they rake your park (if Martin ever saw it done so quickly), I trembled, my head was turned, I was about to hurry out, when some servants rushed towards me to say I must not make so much noise, as they wished to have silence.”

“I shall not make up your loss, for it is necessary you should suffer.”

“I would not accept it, sir, I assure you. I ought to leave here to-morrow, but I shall not go until the day after.”

“Where are you going?”

“To Rastadt ; but read my guide, sir.

“It is very good. I shall return before you do. Now we will go to dinner, as I have ordered it. Have courage. You are a boy to be benefited by a mistake. I have confidence in you.”

Pierre went slowly down-stairs ; passing his hand through his thick curls, he breathed more freely ; the weight had been removed from his heart, he felt it no more. The in-

dulgence of the Count caused him as much joy as surprise. He was yet ignorant of the fact that nothing elevates man more in the eyes of his fellow-man than a confession of his faults.

The Count had learned from his experience of life that frailty is inseparable from human nature, and he also knew that truth and sincerity assist us in restraining our weaknesses. The sight of so much extravagance, idleness, love of pleasure, and the follies of gambling had made the place odious long ago to the Count. Pierre's adventure had not modified his impressions; he admired the enchanting country, regretted many things, and returned home as quickly as possible.

Pierre readily left the city, from which he carried so sad a remembrance. He had about two miles to go before arriving at Gernsbach. In re-entering the valley of the Murg, he passed above the Castle of Eberstein, one of his favorite walks. He had commenced again his travels, and his heart

was lighter; he admired the hills, the rocks, and the ruins, as he passed along, without troubling himself about the names; he chose a cool, shady place, and stopped to take his simple repast. He entered into some of the houses that are scattered about on the borders of the Murg, and inquired of some of the inhabitants the way to Rastadt.

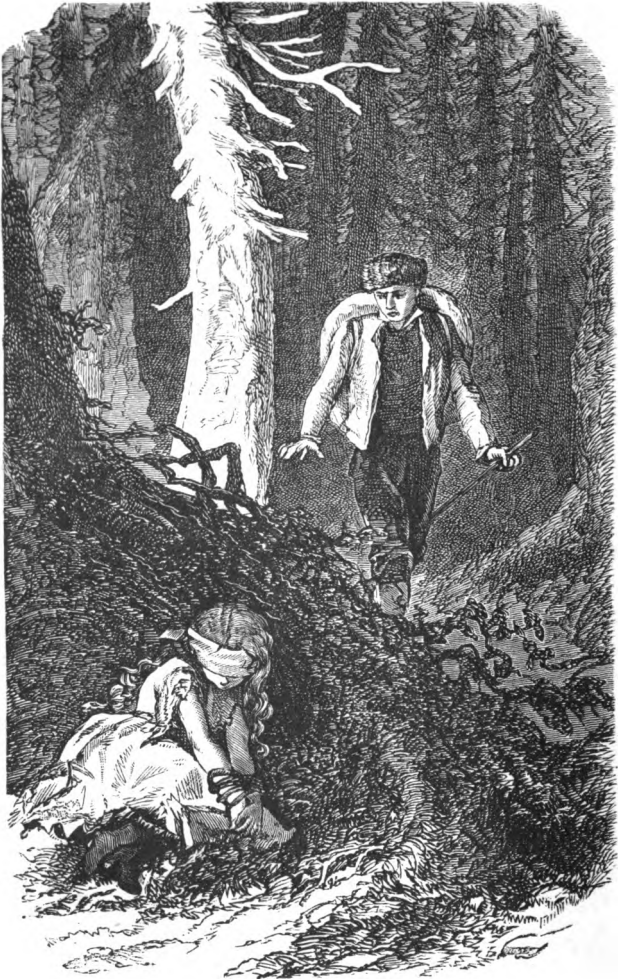
The excellent M. Vincent had never felt satisfied with the union of Alsace to France; when he wrote the name of Rastadt, a deep sigh escaped his lips, and he said to Pierre, "It was in the Chateau of Rastadt, my friend, that the agreement was ratified which gave France the possession of Alsace in 1713. This castle, thank God, is to-day nothing but a barracks. You will find many curious objects of commerce in Rastadt, among which is the manufacture of papier-mache boxes. I should be pleased to have you bring me a tobacco-box."

As he approached the city, Pierre imagined he heard the voice of the good old schoolmaster. We ought to say that he did

not feel at all sorry that he was French ; he respected the opinions of his old friend, without stopping to examine if they were well founded. He did not stay long at Rastadt, only long enough to purchase some articles, among which was the tobacco-box.

Pierre said to himself, " This time I will renounce all the pleasure of the tourist, and hurry on to Carlsruhe." But he could not resist the temptation to follow a number of travellers who were going to the chapel of Saint Margaret. He did not regret the time spent when he saw the beauty of the place. He then started for Carlsruhe by the forest.





"At last he saw a little girl."

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CHAPTER VIII

PIERRE had walked some distance, and he was now in a more lonely spot. He could not doubt that he was on the right way. What man could have come to this way?

"Where is it?" He looked to the right, then to the left, he collected himself. At last he saw a little girl about a year old, sitting on the ground, her dress soiled and torn. A handkerchief over her eyes did not prevent her from weeping in abundance.

Pierre hastened his steps and crossed the obstacles. The child heard his footsteps, and said: "Sir, do not go away; pray, papa and mamma would have much sorrow!" and she ran up and caught him. Pierre said gently: "No."



rest.

153.



CHAPTER XII.

PIERRE had walked some distance when he thought he heard the cries of a child. He listened; he could not doubt the reality. What man could have continued on his way?

Where is it? He looked to the right, and then to the left; he called, retraced his steps. At last he saw a little girl, about five years old, sitting on the ground, her white dress soiled and torn. A handkerchief tied over her eyes did not prevent the tears from falling in abundance.

Pierre hastened his steps in despite of all obstacles. The child heard his approaching footsteps, and said: "Sir, do not kill me, I pray; papa and mamma would have too much sorrow!" She rose up and tried to run. Pierre said gently: "My little girl, do

not be afraid, I have come to befriend you."

"Oh! I am so glad!"

Pierre approached her, took off the handkerchief, that was firmly tied. The compression and the tears had inflamed her eyes; her hands were torn by the thorns and bushes; she trembled from head to foot, although in a suffocating heat. He took her in his arms, wiped her face, kissed her to reassure her.

"Are you afraid of me?" asked Pierre.

"That wicked man kissed me, too, when he carried me away," said the child; "but I see now that you love me, that you will be good to me."

"Tell me, my little girl, how you came here? Who brought you? What is your name?"

"My name is Charlotte, but they always call me Lolotte. Papa is Minister at Carlsruhe. I have a little brother George; he is larger than I; he has a little horse, and promenades with papa and mamma. Yes-

terday, I felt disappointed because I could not go with them. I was amusing myself in the garden; Miss Cook, my governess, left me to get her work, and I ran to the end of the garden to hide from her, when I saw an ugly black man open the little gate with a key. I would have run away, but he said: 'Miss Charlotte, come and see this beautiful live bird. It will eat out of your hand.'

"I love birds, sir, so much, and, although I was afraid of the black man, I went towards him; he took me in his arms, and drew me under his cloak. He had a horse waiting, upon which he jumped, and said:

"'Keep still! we are going to find the birds.'

"When we had gone some distance, he took the cloak off my head. He kissed me, but his ugly face made me afraid, and he smelt bad. I fought and kicked so hard I thought I would fall.

"'Oh! oh! you little, wicked thing,' he said, 'you do not like my caresses. Very well, we shall see!'

"He stopped his horse; bandaged my eyes so tight that I thought it would kill me. He gave me some bread, and said:

"'Wait here; this evening, if you are good, I will come back for you.'

"Then I heard him ride away. If he comes back, you will not let him take me, will you, sir? I will not leave you. Oh! take me back to my home, where everybody is crying. My dear papa and mamma, George, my nurse, everybody!"

"See! do not cry any more, Lolotte, but get up."

The little one obeyed. But such a state as her clothes were in! Pierre took her in his arms, and, having arrived in a convenient place, he washed her little hands and feet, that were scratched by the bushes. He opened his box and took out a pair of stockings, and, although large, put them on her; tore a piece of his fine linen, and made her a kind of overdress.

"You are very rich to have all these things with you," said the child.

Pierre smiled. "I am a travelling merchant. I have all sorts of things for little children."

They walked along until they came to a stream of water. He washed the face of his friend with the finest handkerchief he could find, and even unpacked his little cup to give her a drink. Lolotte was enchanted with it.

The little girl seemed very uneasy. After looking behind her, thinking every moment she heard the footsteps of the villain, she said :

"Monsieur, I am tired; I cannot walk any more."

Pierre hardly knew what to do. The child, seeing his anxious look, said :

"I could sleep on your package; I am not heavy."

This means of transport was in reality the only resource left to the traveller. "I know," said Pierre, "that God will give me strength to carry my double burden, and conduct us safely."

Charlotte drew herself up on the box, and they started.

"Are you comfortable, my little girl?"

"Oh! very, if I am not too heavy."

"No," said Pierre, wiping the perspiration that already covered his face.

It was not long before they left the forest. A sentinel pointed out to him a nice place to rest, and, taking his map from his pocket, he was pleased to see that he was not far from Carlsruhe. All of a sudden, Lolotte began to cry.

"What is the matter, dear little one?" asked Pierre.

"I am so tired, I wish I was home!"

"We will soon be there. See! I will show you my map."

"If I was home, I could play with my doll. Do you sell dolls?"

"No; but I have other pretty playthings."

"Oh! if I had my purse, I would buy some."

"I will show them to you whenever we stop."

"That will be nice."

Lolotte drew near to Pierre, who opened his box filled with trinkets of Nuremberg. He laid them one by one on the grass, and she was in ecstasies with every new object.

An hour thus passed, and he then began to pack up. The two friends were about starting, when Pierre noticed that Lolotte's hair was very much disordered. "I cannot take you back in such a condition. I have some combs also, and I will arrange your hair a little."

"You are going to pull my hair, and I shall cry."

"Have confidence, my dear. I will not hurt you, as you shall see."

"Is it true?" said Lolotte. And she threw herself in Pierre's arms, who kissed her eyes, that were red with tears.

You can imagine this was a pleasing picture—the little girl sitting on the grass, and Pierre on his knees before her, carefully passing the black comb through her golden hair.

Everything is for the best. Having arranged her hair, our travellers again started. Lolotte walked along, holding Pierre by the hand, and never leaving him except to pick a few flowers.

Lolotte becoming tired, he took up his precious burden, and she soon fell asleep. He walked as rapidly and as quietly as he could, for fear of awaking her. He rested occasionally on his stick. They soon arrived near to Ettlingen, which is not far from Carlsruhe.

The first one to whom Pierre related his adventure was Madame Herz, the landlady of the place; she raised her hands to heaven, and exclaimed:

“My brave boy, you have made your fortune! This is the child of the French Minister at Carlsruhe! All the country is in the greatest excitement about her, and I am astonished that you have not met some of the soldiers who are in search for her. Poor little one! See how innocent she looks, fast asleep. Put her on my bed; there is noth-

ing too good for the child of the Minister. You can say you have made your fortune."

"I have not dreamed of such a thing."

"I have. I would rather my husband would have brought back with him that jewel there than that basket of mushrooms he is putting on the table."

Lolotte, awakening, was surprised to find herself on Madame Herz's bed.

The arrival of Pierre spread with the rapidity of lightning. Every one wished to see him. They gave him advice, they offered him their horses and wagons; but Madame Herz advised him to go to the station, which was only a short distance, take a first-class car, and arrive at Carlsruhe as triumphantly as if he was Consul of France.

The young merchant paid for their dinner, started for the station, accompanied by a numerous escort, and took the express train for Carlsruhe.

This was a new thing for Pierre. When he was quietly seated with Lolotte at his

side, and with these fine gentlemen and beautiful ladies, his heart beat rapidly, and the noise of the steam-engine almost bewildered him.

Lolotte kept asking, "When will we get there?" Pierre did not know.

Our travellers attracted general attention; and, whether right or wrong, he was obliged to enter into conversation. One lady took the little girl in her lap, and caressed her like a mother. She opened her bag filled with choice things, and the little girl accepted without ceremony a beautiful bunch of grapes, which she picked like a happy bird.

The lady announced their arrival at Carlsruhe, and immediately the train stopped. Pierre left the car with his precious treasure, but had taken only a few steps when Lolotte was recognized, and Pierre heard them say: "Here she is! 'Tis the child of the Minister! Look! look!" He was surrounded and overwhelmed with questions.

The conductor of the train came forward

and politely asked: "Monsieur, are you acquainted in the city?"

"No, sir," answered Pierre.

"I will accompany you to the hotel of the Minister. Give me the check for your baggage, I will see that it arrives at M. de Vernes'; for I doubt," added he, "whether you will leave there very soon."

Pierre at the house of the Minister!!!

There was no time for reflection, for the crowd followed them. Lolotte kept hold of Pierre's hand.

Carlsruhe is a city that was built during the last century, at the entrance of Hartwald, which leads to the Black Forest. It is in the form of a fan, the principal streets starting from the castle, and running in diverse ways through the forest, ending at the Rhine, the Vosges, and the mountains.

The Minister had sent couriers on all the routes, and the soldiers kept guard at each outlet.

The return of Lolotte was something solemn and touching—the cries of joy, the

going and coming, the opening and shutting of gates, the endless questionings, showed the sincere interest of everybody.

The child rushed toward her mother's room, still holding her liberator by the hand. The door was opened, the mother saw her child, caught her in her arms, and fainted.

"Mamma! mamma! dear mamma!" said Lolotte, "look at me! kiss me! and thank Pierre, who found me in the forest."

But her mother heard nothing, and it was almost two hours before she fully recovered.

Couriers were sent for the Minister, who soon arrived. It would be impossible to describe the scene that followed. Pierre had wished to retire, but Lolotte talked so incessantly of her liberator that it was some time before the father and mother could talk to him. Excited, intoxicated with happiness and surprise, their arms around their dear child, they covered her with kisses, looked at her with joy mingled with fear. Lolotte kept on talking; the beginning and end of her speech was "Pierre;" sometimes running

to him, and throwing her arms about his neck.

"Brave young man," said her father to Pierre, "stay with us as long as you please. I hope this villain who carried away my child, will be soon arrested. Ah! if he were in France, he would have been in jail already!"

Vainly Madeleine's son sought to retire. His box was already sent to the chamber where he was to pass the night.

We leave Lolotte in her mother's arms, to relate this sad adventure, rendered more sad by her innocent description. Nothing was forgotten: her toilet on the grass, her journey on Pierre's back, the playthings, and at last her good sleep on Madame Herz's bed. The little girl was contented and happy. "Would he have killed me, mamma? What for?"

"I do not think he would have killed you, my darling, but would have brought you back when he could receive a large amount of money."

"Are all black men wicked like him?"

"No, my child; but all those who do not fear God are capable of all crimes, whatever may be their color."

The gratitude of the father and mother was without limit. "We have been thinking all the night," said they, "how we can pay you for all you have done for us. How much money will you take to renounce your laborious trade?"

"Do not speak ill of my trade, sir. If I had stayed in my own village, I should not have had the sweet satisfaction of finding your child."

The Minister would have given Pierre a large sum of money, but he firmly refused. "No, sir," said he. "I do not wish to accept the money this villain would have received had he brought back your child."

This seemed reasonable to M. de Vernes, and, after many debates, they decided that Pierre should remain at Carlsruhe as a witness in this sad affair, and then take a fresh start from M. de Vernes' in the cars or

steamboat. His purse well filled, he could buy in the cities he passed through the specialties of the country. When he reached Strasbourg, he should buy a horse and wagon, then go to the different towns, stopping at the castle, and all his life keep M. de Vernes informed of his affairs, and consider him a friend whom he could lean upon.

The young Alsatian accepted these conditions, trembling at the rapidity of his fortune.

The negro who had stolen Lolotte was arrested just as he took the train at Mannheim. He acknowledged that the object of his crime was to obtain money. He would have brought Lolotte back as if he had found her. This was not a new business for him, for at London and New York he had obtained considerable money in this way. He gave them a narcotic beverage calculated to stupefy while taking them away, and prevent a recognition when he returned them to get the reward.

Pierre, dressed in Alsatian costume, went

with Lolotte every day to hear the music on the Place du Château, the Botanic Garden, at the "Orangerie." He had never seen anything so beautiful at home.

Dinner-hour having arrived, M. and Madame de Vernes insisted that Pierre should sit at their table. This honor was declined by the humble Pierre.

"Do you not know, madame, that I am a peasant—Little Pierre of Wasemburg?"

"I only know that you have brought me my child," said she.

The young Alsatian, having readjusted his toilet, took his seat by the side of Lolotte, but he did not feel at ease. By an instinct natural to certain people, our little peasant's manners were modest and refined. He was not awkward, and gracefully acknowledged the compliments paid him.

He wrote his mother a long letter to console her for his prolonged absence. He did not enter into all the details of the circumstances connected with his adventure, for he was modest and retiring, and did not wish

this wonderful story to precede him in his travels.

Madame de Vernes wished to see the place where Pierre found Lolotte. One day, he conducted her to the place, pointed out the brook where he had washed her face, the spot where he had unpacked the playthings of Nuremberg to amuse her. She saw everything, and the poor mother cried from sadness and also from gratitude.

The preparations for departure were made. Nothing was changed in his plan of travel, only he was no more troubled about his box. M. de Vernes had arranged things for him. Every place he passed through, Pierre was to add to his box the beautiful products of the country; and to commence, Madame de Vernes was ordered to make a selection of jewelry made at Carlsruhe. As the brave boy had spoken of his mother and sister with affection, it had not escaped her notice, and she sent them each a gold cross. The day of departure was a day of grief for Charlotte, and of emotion for her parents.

You can imagine Pierre mounted in a carriage, accompanied by his friends. Lotte is on his knees. As the horses pranced along, the passers-by stopped to look, and recognized the hero of Carlsruhe.

The station was reached. They must say good-by. They make him promise to write, and never forget that the ties which united their hearts were indissoluble.

We hope our readers will not think the gratitude of M. de Vernes exaggerated; for we do not hesitate to say that many statues have been raised to men who have not merited them more than our "Petit Pierre." There is no father or mother who is not of our opinion.





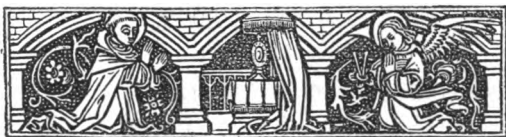
“ Pierre is seated ... a second-class car ”

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THE END OF THE WORLD

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CHAPTER XIII.

THE adieus are made. Little Pierre (we love to call him this still) is seated in a second-class car (for in Germany the first-class cars are kept for the nobility), with his carpet-bag by his side. Pierre always had a good and refined expression. He had no guide-book in his hand, but contented himself in trying to read the names of the different stations. From time to time, he would cross his hands, and say, "This is incredible!"

He was obliged to acknowledge to himself that he was not sorry that he was so comfortably seated, and travelling without the assistance of his feet. He was also surprised to find himself in company with some beautiful ladies, who amused

themselves by opening and shutting their elegant travelling bags, which were filled with articles both useful and useless, which they had prepared for all the exigencies of travel.

In a railroad car we soon become acquainted ; every one, however, is examining those who sit opposite, guessing who they are, where they came from, and where they are going. Pierre had no difficulty in seeing that the persons around him were rich people, travelling for pleasure. Their curiosity was excited in regard to him ; they thought he was neither a peasant nor a gentleman. His good manners and charming physiognomy were in his favor. Two young ladies near him were crocheting, and watching him anxiously. A little incident broke the ice : one of them, in cutting an orange by the window, dropped her silver knife. There was, of course, a general interest. Pierre thought there would be no impropriety in offering her another. The lady accepted, and the conversation became general.

"Have you come from Carlsruhe?" said the gentleman who accompanied them.

"I have been staying there several days, but am going to Baden-Baden."

One of the young ladies asked, "Have the waters benefited you?"

"I have not taken them."

"You are an artist, perhaps?" said another young lady.

"I love everything beautiful in nature, but I do not draw."

The gentleman resumed: "Carlsruhe is an interesting city, and well situated. The Margrave Charles William did not choose a bad spot for his place of repose. Where did you stop, sir?"

"At the house of the Minister."

One of the young ladies inquired: "Are you an *attaché*?"

"Oh! very much attached."

The young lady (almost laughing): "You have certainly heard, then, of the kidnapping of the Minister's little girl. The papers are filled with it. Have you seen the villain?"

"Yes, mademoiselle."

"Is the young Alsatian still at Carlsruhe?"

"He has left."

"They say that M. de Vernes has given him one hundred thousand francs."

"Certainly! it is not too much."

It was now Pierre's turn to laugh.

"Would you like to hear the true story?" demanded Pierre.

"Certainly," they exclaimed altogether.

"Then you can; for I am the Alsatian who was happy to find the child in the forest of Hartwald."

Such an excitement: "Oh! oh! oh!" all exclaimed. All the books were soon shut, and Pierre related with charming simplicity all that had passed.

The ladies cried, and the gentlemen expressed their indignation in very demonstrative language.

One of the young ladies said, "Then it was you? Something seemed to tell my sister and myself that you were not an ordi-

nary traveller. What a fortunate thing for us. We ought to be happy. We can now say that we have travelled with you. And the one hundred thousand francs, is it true?"

"No, miss, I have been overwhelmed with gratitude by Madame and M. de Vernes. I have their esteem and affection, and I am the intimate friend of Miss Charlotte; is this not enough?"

The subject was discussed until they arrived at Heidelberg. Pierre had from necessity modified his plan, and he took the most direct route to Heidelberg.

Now that our merchant was rid of so much baggage, and felt his pocket so well filled, he resolved to become an amateur long enough to visit those places which attracted so many strangers yearly; and, besides, had not M. Vincent said to him: "You must stop at Heidelberg, visit the castle, see the large hogshead, and, if the sky is clear, go up in the highest tower, and you will have a view that you will never forget."

Pierre did not follow his new acquaintan-

ces to their hotel. He looked for one more modest, and found one better than he had seen in all his travels. In the evening he walked about the principal streets, and felt happy that he had arrived so quickly in this city.

What thoughts filled the mind of Madeleine's son as he walked along! All that had passed seemed like a dream. He had already in imagination seen the leaves fall, heard the whistling of the wind; once more he was in the cottage, between his mother and sister, viewing their surprise and listening to their questions, when he was startled from his reverie by a familiar voice; looking up, he recognized his travelling companions.

"Will you visit the castle with us, tomorrow morning?" asked the father of the young ladies.

"Very willingly, sir," answered Pierre; "your company will do me much honor."

"If you could breakfast with us? You must accept, my brave young man, because

at nine o'clock we will start for the castle."

"Oh!" thought Pierre, as he sat on the balcony of his chamber, "is it possible that my society is courted because I have done a good action? Is there a man so wicked that would not have done the same?"

The next morning, at the hour named, Pierre was at the Victoria Hotel. He had dressed himself in his Alsacian costume, not for show, but out of respect for his friend.

The breakfast was animated; Pierre conversed with ease and simplicity.

The young ladies declined riding, and preferred walking in the pleasant shade along the road.

The first view, upon arriving at the castle, was sufficient to satisfy our tourist; but he appreciated the benefit of this visit in company with people of intelligence, and he politely listened to the instructive explanations of M. Letourneurs.

The valley in which this castle is built is called the Jettenbül, from a popular tradition

that the magician Jetta there revealed in great splendor the decrees of destiny. The irregular aspect of the Castle of Heidelberg is owing to its being built at different times by diverse parties. This palace, destroyed and rebuilt twice in a century, was reduced to its present condition by lightning.

The young ladies, impatient to go up the high tower, passed with indifference before the remains of architecture which attracted the attention of more thoughtful travellers. What raptures they were in when they saw, spread out like a map before them, the valley of Neckar, the plains of the Rhine, and the ruins of the old castle! Pierre, heretofore silent and thoughtful, suddenly exclaimed: "I see it! I see it!"

The purity of the atmosphere would have permitted eyes less bright than Pierre's to have distinguished the spire of the Cathedral of Strasbourg.

To his great satisfaction, they arrived at the wine-cellar, where they saw the great curiosity of the castle—the great hogshead

or cask, which is capable of holding two hundred and eighty-three thousand quart bottles of wine. It has been filled three times. It is enclosed by a winding staircase, and on the top of it is a platform. It is said that the first time it was filled the Elector and all his family danced on it.

In front of this cask stands a little old wooden man, comically dressed; near him, a wooden clock, from which hangs a string. On the invitation of the young ladies, Pierre pulled the string, when out sprang a fox's tail and struck him in the face. This clock is said to have been made by this little old man, who was the court fool or jester of Charles Philip. His name was Perkeo. He was just the height of his statue, which is a little over three feet high. It is said he drank fifteen bottles of Rhine wine a day.

Such is the story, and I leave my readers to judge of the truth of it.

After they had walked in the gardens and on the terrace, they resolved to go to the Castle of Wolfsbrunnen. On this

road they saw the Fountain of the Wolf. It is said that the magician Jetta was there devoured by a wolf.

There is a hotel near this fountain, and travellers generally stop to enjoy the fruit and the shade of the beautiful trees. M. Letourneurs proposed a halt, which they all willingly accepted, and did justice to the fruit.

After Pierre had returned to his room, he asked himself if he should renounce his trade of pedlar. Without doubt, he thought of the circumstances he was placed in, of the kindness of M. Letourneurs, of his visit to the Castle of Heidelberg, his walk, and of all the places he would probably never see again ; but duty and reason, those faithful counsellors, quickly answered: "No! You must begin your trade of a travelling merchant at once, and, if Heidelberg has not any articles that will add to your sales, you can at least offer to strangers in the city those which you have."

"All right!" said he to himself, "to-mor-

row, Pierre, you must begin as before in this city."

The next day he was passing the Victoria Hotel, never dreaming of stopping, when he was recognized by his young friends. In a moment they called him, and made him come in; they obliged him to unpack, and bought many articles. Pierre put in his pocket some good French pieces, which gave him more pleasure than the florins and the kreutzers, for those five-franc pieces seemed to him to bear the impress of his country.

His old pleasures returned again; he wondered why everybody was not as happy as he, and the future seemed even more beautiful than the present. "I will return," said he, "to Niederbronn in a covered wagon. What color shall my horse be? What shall I call him?" Then he thought of his mother and sister coming to meet him, and how he would surprise them when he asked them to take a seat in his wagon. "But why don't they write to me? Oh! they do not know where to address their letters. My

good mother, have patience ; time passes, on foot or in a carriage. I will do well all I have to do, whatever it costs me." And Pierre felt his heart full of love and gratitude.

Strangers being numerous this year at Heidelberg, a sort of prestige surrounded our young merchant ; he was pointed out as the preserver of the Minister's daughter at Carlsruhe, and his good appearance confirmed all that was said in his favor. It was better than an advertisement for him ; for his goods were quickly sold and his purse filled.

One beautiful morning, Pierre left for Manheim. He found many beautiful things in this place, among them the public garden on an island. This place is celebrated for the manufacture of a peculiar kind of jewelry, called gold of Manheim. Pierre bought an assortment of this jewelry, and thought all these things were vanities, but remembered that a merchant is not expected to be a philosopher. He did not forget the anise-seed cordial, which

is a specialty of the place, and called the water of Manheim.

Pierre could not cease admiring the Rhine, and he exclaimed, "Can the sea be more beautiful or more majestic!" He heard a bell ring, and saw a steamboat about leaving. Where was she going? To Strasbourg. He gazed after the boat, and felt a kind of sweet regret that he was not going. However, faithful to his plan, he left that evening for Spire





CHAPTER XIV.

QUR Alsacian had arrived at Spire, had breakfasted quietly, and was about starting to circulate about the city, when he suddenly thought of a package he had left. He was obliged to return to Mannheim, happily it was not far.

He returned to the hotel and found the package. The young merchant thought he would take one more look at the Rhine. "Oh! it is so beautiful!" said he, "I love it as if it were some one. Why should I not take a steamboat? After all, the guide of M. Vincent is not the decree of the emperor. And I am sure a merchant ought to be acquainted with all the means of travel. I shall never take a trip on the ocean, but I can take a little fresh air on the steamboat; this would be a new world for me.

Pierre had decided to take the boat, and would have to wait two hours. He passed the time on the bridge, watching the boats coming and going to Cologne and Kehl.

Soon he saw the smoke escaping in thick, black columns, passengers arriving from all directions, and every preparation for departure. He felt as if every one was looking at him, and wondering who he was and where he was going.

The baggage is all on board, the plank drawn in, and here we are under the bridge!

This is the first time that Pierre has acted independently or resigned himself to pleasure. "Poor Lolotte!" thought he, "I am indebted to her for my prosperity. But what would she have done without me? My mother was right when she said, 'Life is an exchange of good services.'"

Pierre did really enjoy himself. The sky was without a cloud, and there was no wind—a rare occurrence on the borders of the Rhine. It was a great surprise to him when

they arranged a table on deck that would accommodate a hundred persons, and at which, by paying a florin, one could have an excellent dinner.

He felt a little confused when he thought of sitting at this table, so abundantly supplied that it excited his appetite. "Supposing," thought he, "I should seat myself by the side of a millionaire or a princess!" The waiter offered him all the dishes (and they were numerous), changed his knife and fork, called him "monsieur." Certainly, it required great composure to avoid the embarrassment of his new situation.

However, Pierre found himself by the side of two English ladies, mother and daughter. "I will eat a good dinner," thought he, "will listen and observe, and try to avoid awkwardness—the only thing I fear, because I am inexperienced. Oh! if my mother and Christine could see me, would they not be surprised?"

Pierre did not know that the English who are familiar with a few words of French

always take advantage of every occasion to learn a few more. He was much astonished when the young lady asked him if he was "un Français."

He answered, "Yes," with a pride that M. Vincent would have disapproved of.

Then the young lady entered into conversation, and immediately her mother joined them.

Pierre had not the appearance of a gentleman, but there was something—I know not what—about him that always attracted the attention of travellers, and, willing or unwilling, they made him talk.

The conversation added pleasure to the repast of our young Alsatian. He found it very agreeable to see the multitude of dishes successively presented to him. He was much amused at his new situation, and, while he glanced at the beautiful landscape, he did not lose sight of his plate. Many times the exclamation, "It is incredible!" escaped his lips, but the English ladies took this for admiration instead of surprise, and

added their impressions to those of Pierre.

A boat is a little world, and our merchant noticed all that was passing around him. The most of the conversation seemed insipid to the young hero of Carlsruhe in comparison with what he could relate. All these people were travelling for pleasure, and yet sadness and *ennui* could be traced on each countenance. "I can understand," said Pierre, "the sadness, for the heart cannot always be contented; but how can people become tired in such weather on such a beautiful river?"

He was making these philosophical reflections, when the attention of the travellers was reanimated by the view of Coblenz. The admiration was general. The young English girl drew from her pocket an album, and began to sketch, with perfect ease, the view that was passing before her. Pierre watched her with pleasure, and this interest established quite an intimacy between the ladies and the young man.

Little by little the conversation became animated. The ladies had visited Paris, Versailles, Bordeaux, Marseilles, everywhere. Pierre listened, and also asked a great many questions; he had never heard so many interesting things. The effect produced on him by the ladies was so great that it inspired a desire to relate his adventures, but the necessity to speak of one's self seems like boldness to most men. It is like the hunger of the young, that cannot rest before a well-filled table.

But Pierre, wishing to return their kindness for entertaining him, began to relate his exploits. Not only did he have for listeners the two English ladies, but many others. The story flew from mouth to mouth, and everybody wished to see and to hear the young liberator of Lolotte.

Pierre had not thought of such an excitement, and was much embarrassed; he would soon have recovered from this, however, but just at that moment the young English girl, having lost all timidity, said to Pierre: "Sir,

you would make a splendid picture for my album, and I should be so happy to have your portrait to show in England."

A round of applause settled the proposition of Miss Laura, and Pierre, feeling that all resistance would be useless, submitted with good grace.

All circumstances, happy or unhappy, of our lives are mingled with thoughts of those we love; and as Pierre stood with head elevated, and his attention fixed on the beautiful landscape, he was thinking: "Oh! if my mother and sister could see me at this moment, they would believe it a dream."

Miss Laura had great talent, and the spectators declared that the sketch was good, excellent, charming. Pierre smiled with pleasure when he saw himself in the album of this young lady, his name, the name of his village, the date of the day it was taken, nothing was forgotten.

After a few minutes had passed, Pierre rubbed his forehead, turned his cap over and over in his hands before he dared speak;





"Pierre . . . submitted with good grace."

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then, taking courage, advanced. Listen to what he says to Miss Laura:

“Mademoiselle, since you have so much talent, would you, without taking too much trouble, give me a copy of my portrait? My mother would put it on the mantelpiece, and, when I am away, she would look at it with so much comfort.”

“Oh! with the greatest pleasure, sir,” said Miss Laura. And she commenced immediately. She tried her best, drew the boat and a glimpse of the passing scenery. When she had finished her work, she tore the leaf from the album, and handed it to Pierre.

You can imagine with what care our young friend put away this precious portrait. “I do not know,” said he, “whether all travellers experience as much pleasure. In my case, I can only say it is incredible!”

Buried in these happy thoughts, our merchant arrived in Kehl. He visited the Custom House officer, and his interview

was longer and more important than the first; but he had gained confidence in himself.

With what satisfaction he seated himself in the omnibus that carries travellers from Kehl to Strasbourg; for the time had gone by when he walked along with his box on his back; all his packages were placed on the top of the omnibus. The English ladies would have been pleased to have taken him as guide to Strasbourg, but he politely refused. He had some business to attend to, some friends to see, for he preferred a thousand times to carry the tobacco-box to M. Vincent than devote his time to strangers.

They separated; Pierre arrived at the Haute Montée, and his three large packages produced a most wonderful effect on the hostess, who stood with hands raised, and exclaimed: "There are no people in the world like the Alsacians to find the road to fortune!"

Pierre was satisfied with his triumphant

entry to the Haute Montée, and he acknowledged the kind attentions and good heart of Madame Knops. Their conversation was long and interesting; but we will leave them until Pierre resumes his walk.





CHAPTER XV.

PIERRE had started, and walked but a short distance, when he met an old peasant, leading by the bridle a mule, with shining skin, small eyes, and long ears. He saluted her with "Good-day;" she stopped, and a faint smile passed over her sad face as she said: "Would you by chance have need of a mule, as there is not his equal in the world?"

"No, my good mother," replied Pierre; "my feet answer my purpose at present."

"Oh! Pasha is not vain and content to walk about idle; he is a beast that works hard—five hours a day, carries four hundred pounds, and drags a cart better than some horses I know."

"What makes you sell such an animal?"



"He is worth his weight in gold."

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up

the other side

the other side of the road

the other side of the hill

the other side of the valley

the other side



"Necessity! Nothing but love for my child would separate me from Pasha. Poor friend," added she, caressing him.

"Are you short of means, good mother?"

"I am reduced to the last extremity by the sickness of my only son—my support, who has escaped the Conscription. We were so happy until he was taken sick, now everything is changed; some one must replace the hands of my poor Michel, and Pasha must go to pay for food, and the attendance of a doctor, to restore my son's health."

"Are you going to Strasbourg?" asked Pierre.

"Yes; the neighbors would not give enough for him."

"How much would you sell him for?"

"He is worth his weight in gold; but I do not think I shall get more than two hundred francs."

"A good price.

And Pierre started to go, at the same time thinking to himself: "Why should I not buy this mule? M. de Vernes, in the

enthusiasm of his gratitude, gave me money to buy a horse; but, truly, can a boy like me assume so much grandeur? Pasha is strong, would do my business, and, if taken good care of, would appear much better."

Pierre looked around. The peasant looked around also.

"Poor woman!" thought Pierre. "What shall I do? It is truly a struggle between my mind and heart. I can return some of the gifts of fortune, and I ought to take this occasion to assist a mother and son." He turned and walked slowly towards her; the peasant did not move.

"If your mule was a horse, I would take it at once."

"A horse! I have never had one, and I never wish one; an animal so proud was not made for people like us. Pasha is as humble as the horse of the General is proud and impatient."

"Well, I will take Pasha."

"Do you speak truly?"

"Certainly! How much do you ask?"

“What you think is right; for something tells me that Pasha will be well treated with you, and that makes a difference in our bargain.”

“I will give you what you ask; only take him home with you. I am going to Bru-math, and to-morrow in passing I will take him.”

“Pasha is six years of age, and, if you treat him well, will live twenty-five or thirty years.”

“I do not doubt it.”

After listening to a long eulogy on Pasha, which tried his patience and goodness, Pierre had the satisfaction of seeing her leave with the animal, and he continued his route, meditating and hoping that happiness would flow from the choice he had made.





CHAPTER XVI.

ARRIVING at the house of M. Vincent, Pierre tapped lightly on the window-pane. No one answered; the scholars had a vacation. He rapped at the door, and in the kind invitation to "come in" he recognized the voice of the school-master.

M. Vincent was sitting by the fire, enveloped in a large gray shawl, and with a black silk cap on his head, that completely covered his ears.

At the sight of Pierre, the old man uttered an exclamation of joy, and his face beamed with pleasure.

"Are you sick?" Pierre asked eagerly.

“Oh! it’s nothing, my friend. Your presence, I feel already, will restore my health,” said he, giving his hand to Pierre.

“Here, Justine! Come, quick! Set the table, put on the ham; take the key you will find in the closet, and get a bottle of Moselle wine.”

The servant appeared confounded, for the Moselle wine was not produced on ordinary occasions. However, she obeyed, and the table was soon ready.

Pierre related to his friend all the particulars of his travels, not forgetting his sad adventure at Baden, and again found indulgence.

M. Vincent knew that travelling by steamboat was very agreeable; but he somewhat regretted that Pierre had not followed the plan laid down by him, as the good old man had a particular partiality for the old city of Spire, and would have been pleased to have known what impression it made on Pierre; for the old friend was always the “school-master.” He told him that Spire was a city

robbed of its primitive grandeur; that Cæsar had encamped in Spire when the Huns burnt it; spoke of the unhappiness caused by the war of Louis XIV., by which its inhabitants were obliged to fly to Alsace, Lorraine, and Burgundy. The penalty of death was pronounced against those who attempted to cross the Rhine. He also gave a description of the burning of the city, and became so excited that Pierre felt obliged to participate in his indignation. The good old teacher could hardly find expressions strong enough to blast the memory of Louis XIV. "Even the cathedral," said he, "did not escape, and for six years Spire remained a heap of cinders."

M. Vincent knew nothing of the city that had grown up out of the ashes, and Pierre regretted he had not stopped at Spire, although he would not have enjoyed the view as much as the description of M. Vincent.

Pierre was polite instinctively, and, wishing to evince some interest in the school-

master, changed the conversation by saying :
“When do you think of retiring from your labors, M. Vincent ?”

“When my strength fails me, my friend—not until then will I have fulfilled my task.”

“Your task ! At your age, it seems to me that you have done enough good in your life to rest.”

“There is no point at which we should stop trying to do good, my young friend ; as long as man has strength, he ought to work. Work ! do you not know that it is the joy of the heart, the rule of life ? I put this before the eyes of my pupils every day. I bring it in everywhere, under all forms ; from the earliest day, I habituate this grand word to the ears of the children, and try to make them love it. Me rest ! You know not, my young friend, how I wish to see and hear my pupils. I have been here thirty years, and I hope the Minister has forgotten me, and will not put me on the superannuated list.”

Pierre could not understand the enthusi-

asm of the teacher for a work which seemed to him painful ; but the conviction of the old man illuminated his noble face, and Pierre became filled with admiration. The two friends separated, hoping to meet again.

Pierre had not forgotten the kindness and care he received from Andre's mother when he was wounded by the assassin, and left her a little present. He had received some thoughtful impressions at the house of M. Vincent, but his ideas took a more lively turn, for he was going to find Pasha.

The good woman testified much feeling in parting with her mule, and seemed to forget to look at the money she had received for the animal.

Pierre took Pasha by the bridle, listened again to the old woman's instructions, and left. He felt more contented than proud ; however, all men feel the need of a little self-praise, and Pierre, while admiring Pasha, conceived a certain satisfaction to find himself in the comfortable position he had reached in so short a time. He ascertained,

also, that luxury is troublesome, for he was obliged to look after the comfort of his mule, and to pay double toll at the superintendent's near by.

Arriving at Strasbourg, he hastened to buy a covered cart that would not be too heavy for Pasha to draw. After all his purchases were made, Madeleine's son felt anxious to reach his native village. Stopping at the Haute Montée, Madame Knops assisted him in his preparations for departure, predicted that the day was not far off when he would have a shop in front of the Hôtel de Paris, bid him good-by, stood in the door, and watched the young merchant until he disappeared in the distance. Pierre certainly made a good appearance, with his whip and scarlet reins in hand, sitting in front of his green cart, although the gait of the animal did not warrant great speed.

As he rode along, Pierre believed it almost a dream. What a surprise it would cause in the village! At the house of his friends! He thought he would write in the

morning, and tell them the day he would arrive at the chateau.

His mother and Christine would expect to see him returning in the stage, in place of which he would be mounted in his own cart, or walking along by the side of Pasha!

Two years had hardly passed, and here is Pierre! If this brave boy had exaggerated the effect his appearance would produce, it is, however, true to say that his entrance in any of the little towns or hamlets caused a great sensation.

His old acquaintances hardly recognized Petit Pierre, who was no longer little. Confidence increases with fortune, and the young Alsatian had done a much better business than before. They gave him their commissions, they caressed his mule, admired his cart, and asked a thousand questions.

He loved his business, and would not change it. His happiness was increased when he saw these roads he had walked over.

He had a large memorandum-book, with

orders to fulfil. He had, also, to buy a box with a good lock, for his money.

The last hours which separate us from the end of our desires seem the longest. Pierre entered at last in the forest of Haguenau: it was his country: "I will have a little patience." What would the tender mistress of Pasha say, if she had seen him gallop along, covered with perspiration? for Pierre felt impelled to almost fly along.

But here is the Castle of Reichshoffen. In a few minutes he would see his mother and sister. "Then, Pasha, you shall have the reins thrown over your back. Who knows? Perhaps you will have the honor of resting in the stable of the castle." And, throwing the reins over the animal, he jumped down, and as he walked along under the shade of the trees, he sung, he sighed, walked forward, then returned; presently, he saw a young girl coming towards him, with a handkerchief to shield her from the sun, but she did not seem to recognize him. Can it be her? Christine would never imagine that

the owner of this pretty cart was her brother, no more than Pierre expected to see his sister without his mother.

When they were nearly face to face, a double cry of surprise was heard, and they flew into each other's arms.

"Where is mother?" asked Pierre.

"At home."

"Sick?"

"Yes, my brother."

Pierre was silent, and his sister also.

"Christine," at last said Pierre, "is mother sick?"

"Yes!" And a torrent of tears covered her face, and dropped on the pretty cape that Pierre brought her long ago.

However, Pierre breathed more freely as he thought: "A sick mother is yet there, and I have returned just in time to restore her to health by my presence, and with money to procure all those comforts so necessary to restore her health."

He embraced his sister again, and looked at her with tearful eyes.

"How you have grown! Get in the cart, and tell me all about it. I ought to stop at the castle, but at present it is impossible."

"About six months ago," said Christine, "mother found, upon waking in the morning, that she could not get up, and her legs felt as if they were asleep. However, by trying and leaning on my shoulder, she managed to get in her arm-chair, but she was obliged to remain there all day. She cried, and I also. I ran to find the old nurse Nicole, and, when she saw mother, she bowed her head, and said, 'My poor Madeleine, it is a touch of paralysis.' The doctor arrived, he was very good, and said, 'Do not be discouraged; at your age there is a good chance to recover from it.' My brother, I did not know what would become of us or what to do. I wanted to write to you, but mother did not wish me to. The neighbors came every day to wash and dress mother. It is only her limbs that are affected, otherwise she seems well, sews, and talks all day.

“Mother Nicole said to me :

“‘ Ah ! Christine, see what trouble can come to us in one night ! You must go to work, my child ; I will show you. There is no one but you to take care of your mother and keep house.’

“I have done all that Mother Nicole told me to do ; you will see how clean and comfortable our house is. Mother felt sad when she saw me clean, sweep, cook, and wash. She needs me every moment, and she says I am her feet, her arms, and her heart also.”

Pierre listened quietly, while the tears ran down his cheeks.

“It is not necessary to cry, my brother,” said Christine. “You will find mother in good spirits, waiting impatiently to see you.”

“Poor little one ! I was so happy while you suffered.”

“Is this mule yours ?”

“Certainly.”

“Then mother can ride out sometimes, and she can go to church without depending

on the neighbors. I think that mother will recover, for her limbs are not always insensible. The other night, when I knelt down before her to say my prayers, I leaned on her knees, and she said, 'Lean hard, Christine, I wish to know if I can feel your elbows.' Sometimes she says laughingly, 'Yes, yes! I feel them.' Marianne de Walburg comes here every Sunday with her daughter Marie, and we go and walk together while our mothers talk. I love Marie like a sister, and am always happy to have Sunday come."

"And the castle?" interrupted Pierre.

"The Count and Countess come often, and bring mother provisions of all kinds."

"And the good woman Fritz?"

"Dead, my brother; and Michel also."

"And our old friend Winkel?"

"Dead, my brother; his son returned without being rich."

Then thought Pierre: "I ought to thank Heaven that I have found my mother and sister." However, Pasha advanced steadily,

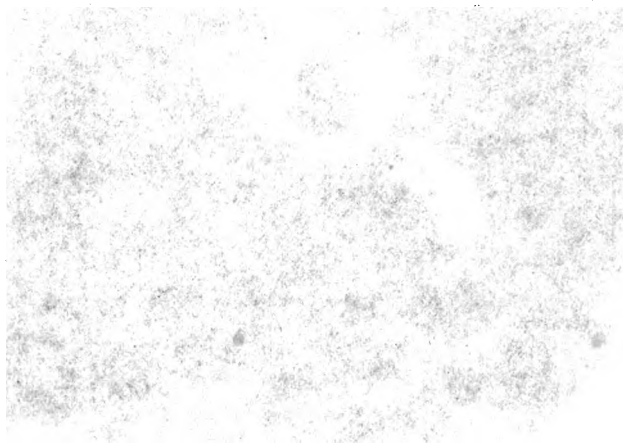
and in about twenty minutes they entered Wasembourg.

"There have been," continued Christine, "a great many ladies and gentlemen this summer at Niederbronn to drink the yellow water, and the merchants have done a good business. The Count wants you to have a shop there."

Pierre heard nothing. He saw the steeple of Niederbronn, the wood of Jaegerthal with its delightful shades, heard the noise of the forge. All these souvenirs of his infancy filled his mind. They have arrived at the cottage.

Some neighbors stood around the door. "Good-day! Petit Pierre," said some of his oldest acquaintances. "Good-day! Monsieur Pierre," said others, as they looked at Pasha and the covered cart.

"Good-day, good-day!" said Pierre, and left Christine to look after Pasha and gratify the curiosity of the neighbors. Entering the cottage, he saw his mother smiling, although much excited. He ran and threw himself





"He ran and threw himself into her arms."

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into her arms, and, after affectionately embracing her, began at once to talk about his travels, until the emotion his return had caused passed away.

Madeleine's countenance had not changed, and the joy she felt at the return of her son gave her a look of happiness.

Pierre thought, "Christine is right, she will recover."

His sister called him to unharness Pasha. The packages were put in the garret, and the precious money-box was put in the closet. The cottage now presented a new appearance. Pasha was lodged temporarily at Mother Nicole's. The cart was put under the shade of an old oak-tree, and a week had not passed before Pasha had a stable.

Christine, with her dress carefully raised and pinned back, prepared the supper. You should have seen the little housekeeper, armed with a long, wooden spoon, stir the soup—object, at present, of all her hopes.

Madeleine called the attention of Pierre to

the movements of his sister. Nothing was easier than to convince this good brother that Christine was admirable in her filial duty.

The supper was soon ready. Christine approached the arm-chair, as usual, to assist her mother, but the strong arms of her brother claimed this privilege.

Their mother ate with a good appetite—so good that Pierre felt all the illusions of unclouded happiness he had dreamed of. They talked of his travels; he told them of his adventure at Hartwald, the finding of Lolotte, and his reception at Carlsruhe. Madeleine shed tears at this recital.

We do not underestimate the sensibility of this good woman, but we think other thoughts besides the sad story of Lolotte were the cause of the tears.

The return of Pierre was a great event. They spoke of his fortune with the exaggeration that generally accompanies such news. All kind-hearted people were glad of the widow's prosperity; others thought

it so unfortunate that Madeleine's paralysis should mar their happiness; while others said, "They must not expect too much prosperity. Madeleine is rich, now she can pay the doctor."

Those who made these last remarks were not really bad people; but there is hidden in the human heart a secret jealousy of those pleasures in which we cannot participate.

Early the next day, Pierre went to the castle. He was received like a hero that had been wounded on the battle-field. The Count and Countess spoke kindly of his mother, and offered him many consolations. They had decided that Pierre should establish himself at Niederbronn, for, as Christine had told him, the mineral water for which that place is now so celebrated was becoming known, and many people came to seek restoration to health. The well-selected goods of all kinds that Pierre had brought with him were just the things to draw custom.

The shop was selected and rented from the first of the next May. The Count thought it best that Pierre should continue his business as usual until then, as he had no other use for Pasha and his cart. This conversation had taken place in the Count's library, Pierre sitting between his benefactors.

Additional means were placed at his disposal. It was not simply generosity in the Count and his wife that influenced them to make him this offer, but they felt an interest in their young friend. This noble boy, who came to them a stranger, had confided his projects to them and timidly asked assistance. Can we blame them for taking such an interest in him?

He had started out with a little box, but had also industry, economy, honesty, and good sense. His success had surpassed all expectations, and we see in him but a type of those who, possessed of the same strength of mind and character, soon discover the road that leads to fortune.

The rich Count found real satisfaction in his work, and felt that Pierre's success or failure was his.

The waters of Niederbronn were known to the Romans, but it is only within the past twenty-five years that they have become generally known. At the time we write, the pretty valley where the springs are found had not attracted many, but each year the number was increasing, and when Pierre opened his shop the watering season was fully established. Before the arrival of visitors, the houses were repaired, blinds painted, windows cleaned, numerous carts loaded with furniture arrived from Strasbourg, and on the smallest house could be seen this notice, "Furnished apartments to let."

The spring is situated in a beautiful grove. At first, there were but a few little shops scattered about, but as visitors increased, stores of all kinds multiplied. Pierre made no objections to the proposals of the Count. He saw himself already in his shop, his

mother sitting at the counter, and Christine, with her pleasing manners, could not fail to attract customers.

However, winter had come, and Pierre felt that he ought to start on his business. But it had always been the wish of his heart to visit the neighboring valley, and circumstances had always prevented him until the present time.





CHAPTER XVII.

TO the right of the valley of Niederbronn lies the valley of Baerenthal, which leads to Bitche. An old relative of his mother's lived at the end of this valley. Madeleine had not felt able to go and visit him since she became a widow, and now it was impossible.

Pierre was going to see him. He asked no greater pleasure than to walk along with stick in hand, he had become so accustomed to it, and especially if he had nothing to carry.

Christine and Pierre had often heard the valley of Baerenthal spoken of. It was often called the Valley of Bears, and the name frightened them.

This valley presents a curious appearance with its large ponds and numerous charcoal

kilns. It is said to be the retreat or home of the gypsies. They live in mud-huts or hollow caverns in the rocks, and these strange people are seen occasionally. The women smoke pipes and wear boots; this used to seem a strange thing, but to-day we need not go to Baerenthal to see women with boots on.

Christine had no desire to make this trip. "Suppose you should meet a bear?" said she to Pierre.

"I should teach him to dance."

"But if he should eat you up?"

"The French bears are too good to do this. I should have to go a great ways from here to meet a bear, although, if I find one of these travellers on the road, I will invite him to dine with me."

One beautiful December morning, while the icicles were still hanging from the trees, Pierre embraced his mother and sister, and started for the Valley of Bears. He was delighted to traverse the forest without any care. The solitude was profound—the only



"He saw a woman . . . carrying an infant in her arms."

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1. The first step is to identify the problem or question that needs to be answered. This involves understanding the context and the specific requirements of the task.

the patient had been in the hospital for 10 days, and he had been treated like the patient described, carrying out the same procedure. The patient stopped taking the medicine.

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copies, but he has more.



noise heard was his own footsteps. He believed he was a stranger to fear, but he began to sing the little favorite songs of childhood.

As he walked along, he saw a woman, who looked like the gypsies he had heard described, carrying an infant in her arms; she stopped before Pierre, and said with sweet timidity: "My gentle boy, I pray you take my child; I have not strength to carry him further."

"With pleasure," replied Pierre. "Where are you going?"

"To my grandmother's. I have only this child; my others are dead. This one is sick, and I am afraid to stay alone with him."

"Poor little one!" said Pierre caressingly.

The woman, who seemed until then lost in sorrow, smiled, and thanked Pierre for his kindness.

He had heard so many strange things of these gypsies, but he would not believe them any more. "They are," thought he, "like all mothers; they love their children."

They walked along side by side, and occasionally she would raise the little red cap that covered the baby's head, to see if it were sleeping quietly.

"Truly," thought Pierre, "I am made for adventures. When will they end?"

And, as if responding to his thoughts, the gypsy said:

"Do not be afraid; we do evil only to those who curse us. Zara, the mother of this child, has never been guilty of ingratitude. I know where you live. I will keep my eye on you, and, if your house should take fire, me and mine would fly to your assistance."

"Do you know me?" asked Pierre.

"It is the first time I have met you face to face, but I know who you are."

Pierre felt a little flattered, but asked no questions.

The road was good, and they soon perceived the ruins of Falkenstein.

The gypsy stopped a short distance behind, so as not to disturb Pierre in his sur-

prise, and as he meditated on this immense mass of reddish-gray stone, she said:

"This castle once belonged to a noble family who sold it to other lords. It was struck by lightning, and since then has not been inhabited. Those scaffoldings you see will take us to the highest part of the ruins. There are some large rooms in the rocks, which we use. Will you go up?"

Pierre refused. She again thanked him before leaving for his kindness, and offered him a clay pipe, different from anything he had ever seen.

Our traveller felt a satisfaction when he found himself alone; he knew not whether he was glad or sorry of this adventure. "After all," said Pierre, "a good action is always worthy of a name; and, if this woman loves her child, she would not harm one who has carried it in his arms."

The remainder of the trip was made, and Pierre found his old relative well and in good spirits. After relating his adventure in the forest in which he was interested, the old

man said: "This woman will keep her word; you will never be robbed by any of her tribe."

Pierre related all that had transpired since the death of his father. The old man would have transported his cottage to Wasembourg, to have been near Madeleine, but said he: "At my age it is better to die where I have always lived."

Pierre was disappointed that he could not persuade his great-uncle to return; however, he felt happy that his visit had pleased the old man. He loved to converse with the old, for he had always found that, by following their advice, he had been benefited.

He passed the night with his uncle, for, notwithstanding the fine promises of the gypsy, he did not feel disposed to travel the Baerenthal at night.

The next day the old man said to his nephew: "I have not much heritage to leave you. After my death, you must take all you can find here; but I wish to give you my beautiful goose, as a token of gratitude for your kind and affectionate visit."

Pierre felt sad to accept this old man's present, but he could not refuse, so he promised him he would come and see him again, as soon as the weather was pleasant, and bring him some articles of which he thought he was in need.

Our young friend arrived home safe and sound, and I leave the reader to judge of the interest with which his adventures were listened to by his mother and sister.

Pierre was obliged to go to Strasbourg before the fine weather came and the visitors arrived at Niederbronn.

He thought he would take a new route, and go to Froeschwiller by the forest of Grossenwald. It was not a good idea, but he started. Froeschwiller is separated from Woerth by a mountain, which makes the communication in winter almost impossible.

The season was not severe, but the ice gave the mountain the appearance of a mirror. Pasha stopped short, and surveyed this disagreeable, if not dangerous, situation, and Pierre felt disposed to return, when the

gypsy of Baerenthal appeared. She addressed Pierre :

“He is well, and I have been looking for you to thank you. I have arrived just in time to relieve your embarrassment. For,” added she, smiling, “if you wish to take a road that is not travelled by everybody, follow me. I know a road you can take, and you will get to Woerth sooner than by the one you were going to take. My child is well ; come and see him.” And without waiting for an answer, she led Pierre to a kind of hut, where her child was sleeping.

She took her treasure in her arms, and led the way. The cart brushed against the trees that bordered this narrow way, and Pasha did not seem willing to enter.

In about half an hour, the gypsy stopped, and said :

“I must leave you now, but, if you follow my directions, you will arrive at Woerth.” She said good-by, and watched him a long time.

In despite of his love of adventure and



Pierre accompanying his mother to church.

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the service that the gypsy had rendered him, Pierre did not feel satisfied to find himself the favorite of one of those creatures (whether for good or evil) who are the terror of the country they inhabit. "Nonsense!" said he, after reflection, "a benefit is always a benefit, and those who relieve their fellow-beings God will love."

He continued his route and arrived at Strasbourg, where he remained some time, for he was authorized to buy for several large houses of Niederbronn. These orders being all well filled, he returned home. Pierre invented a thousand little surprises to make his mother forget her infirmities.

On certain days, Pasha was saddled and carried Madeleine to church, and sometimes to the chateau. The time had gone by when Mother Nicole carried provisions to Madeleine; now this good woman sat at the widow's table and received the choicest piece. The cottage was no more quiet, they had plenty of company.

One evening, when the visits of friends

had been more animated than usual, Pierre remarked to his mother "that he was delighted and surprised to see her forget for a moment her infirmities."

"My child," said Madeleine, "to be happy in this world we must mingle a little with others, not be too exacting, look with courage on the dark side of things, and become resigned."

As his benefactors had decided he should establish himself at Niederbronn, Christine could hardly wait for the return of spring, as the snow rendered it impossible to go before that time.

Oh! how happy she was when they felt the first spring days! "Now we shall go to Niederbronn!" This hope brought a thousand projects. She saw herself sweeping the shop, arranging the Bohemian glasses, selling them to the beautiful ladies, her mother keeping the accounts, and sitting, when the weather is pleasant, outside the door, in her beautiful arm-chair with wheels that Pierre had brought her from Strasbourg.

No ! Happiness is not banished from this earth, it is often near us. With courage and perseverance, we will surely find it.

The happiness of Pierre consisted in having this shop at Niederbronn, a good arm-chair for his mother, and a little money saved ; then he was contented to work and hope.

It was a solemn day when the family left Wasembourg. Pasha, harnessed to a cart, transported all the articles that composed their modest household. It was a beautiful May morning when they entered Niederbronn.

They were arranging things in their new home, when a carriage stopped before the door. The Count and Countess had come to settle an important question : what sign should the young Alsatian adopt ? The Count, who was not ignorant of the ways of the world, knew it was necessary to attract the attention of idlers.

It was decided that Pierre with his box on his shoulders ought to be placed in the

annals of the country as the model of filial piety. The artist chosen by the Count to execute this design mounted a ladder, and drew over the shop a picture representing the young Alsatian with a glad and modest countenance, apparently forgetful of the weight his shoulders carried; under, the name "PETIT PIERRE" was painted in large red letters, that could not escape the observation of the most careless.

Pierre asked, "Am I always to be called Little Pierre?"

"Yes, my friend," said the Count; "and in your old age this name will make your heart feel young again."

Christine never lost sight of the artist for a single moment. She followed him in all his movements, and we shall not say that the soup was as good as usual that day.

The Count was right: the sign was a true talisman. Strangers visited the shop of Pierre, and soon immense boxes of merchandise were forwarded to the shop of the young Alsatian.



"Pierre has become a wealthy merchant."

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CHAPTER XVIII.

TWELVE years have passed away. Pierre has become a wealthy merchant of Niederbronn. He is married to the oldest daughter of Rose of Walburg. Madeleine's health has improved, and this good woman is now able to walk with the aid of crutches. She has had the pleasure of assisting at the marriage of her son—height of her ambition !

The relations of Pierre with the Minister's family have remained unbroken, although a year has passed since they had heard from Lolotte.

One day, a carriage stopped before the shop. A young woman and her husband entered, and purchased many articles. After a few moments had elapsed, the young woman said :

"Very well! 'Little Pierre' has forgotten Lolotte."

What a scene! Pierre turned scarlet, caught Lolotte's hand, turned round and round, called his mother, his wife, Christine, he knew not where he was. Happily, Mrs Pierre was more composed, and invited the visitors into the little parlor back of the store, which was a model of tidiness.

Lolotte had become "My Lady." Lord William took Pierre by the hand, and was delighted to see one whose remembrance was so dear to all the family.

"Did you not recognize me, Pierre?" enquired Lolotte.

"Perfectly well; but you must pardon me, for the surprise was so great it upset me. Are your father and mother well?"

"Very well; they expect to come to Alsace, this season."

"Have you come to drink the water?"

"Not at all. I come to take the air."

"It is a famous air."

"But what little child is this who seems listening to the conversation?"

"It is my daughter, my lady."

"What is her name?"

"Lolotte," answered Pierre, blushing.

"Dear Pierre, what happiness it gives me that you have named her after me! I hope she will love me."

Little Lolotte, seeing she was the object of conversation, ran to her mother and hid her little, curly head. Pierre was happy. My lady announced her intention of remaining long enough to see all the beautiful things in the country.

"You will see, madame," said Pierre, "I have not been too vain of Alsace; but it will take some time to see all its beauties."

"I shall take plenty of time, my friend. You must give me some directions, or I shall get lost."

"Oh! there is no danger now; my lord is with you. But if you wish to begin systematically, you must visit the forge of Niederbronn. I shall be obliged to inform you

that, among other things, we make cannon-balls ; but I assure you that living so near the forge has not made me belligerent, and, if I had been the one to advise, France would not have joined England in a war.

“Since madame lives at Reichshoffen, you should not fail to make the trip of Jaegerthal, one of the most beautiful of the country. The views of the landscape are beyond description. Not far from the ruins of Windstein is the pond made to supply the engines of the forges with water. When Christine was little, she believed that this pond was ink, because the fir and beech trees that cover the mountains give it a dark color.

“There are also the ruins of Hohenfels, of Windeck, and many others I know nothing of ; but the Count can tell you when and how all these castles have been destroyed. My favorite ruin, my lady, is the Schoeneck. Ah ! when you have ascended the highest mountain and seen the surrounding ones covered with the ruins of castles,

seen the valley of Dambach and Oberstenbach, you will say, 'Truly, little Pierre has good taste.'"

"Is the valley of Baerenthal far from here?"

"As for that, I can give you a little story." And he related his adventure. "You need not be afraid, my friend; the gypsy, I presume, already knows that you have honored me with a visit. You can surely follow the beautiful row of poplars which lead from Niederbronn to Bitche; at Phalsbourg, you can take the mountains to the right, and in a short time you will be in the valley of Baerenthal, where I can assure you the bears do not inhabit, but you will find some splendid crabs, carps, and some trout, which all strangers love to taste. And finally, my lady, if you meet the gypsy, you can tell her what I said."

"It would not be worth the trouble."

"In returning, you should visit Falkenstein, which is not far from Phalsbourg. It is one of the most interesting ruins, and it will

attract your attention immediately, for it is of a peculiar reddish-gray color. I would advise you not to go up to the top of the castle, it is not safe."

My lord smiled, and promised my lady should not ascend the ruins of Falkenstein. He looked at his watch, and the young people left for the chateau of Reichshoffen.

You can judge of the effect these visits produced. Madeleine herself sometimes felt astonished.

M. and Madame Vernes also paid the young merchant a visit. Lolotte had brought a pretty assortment of articles from London, and had the pleasure of seeing them in Pierre's shop.

Within the past year, Christine had been engaged to the oldest son of Rose of Walburg. The time had not yet quite arrived for the marriage of the young people. It was left for Madeleine to fix the day.

Lolotte (excuse us for calling her this) had obtained from the Countess the privilege of arranging the wardrobe of Christine,

and nothing was forgotten. Petit Pierre and his wife received a new suit, and Madeleine also.

The inhabitants of Niederbronn had never witnessed such a wedding. The church appeared as on a feast day. The Lipp family were esteemed by everybody, and the people that filled the church could all truly be called friends.

Christine was conducted to the altar by her brother. Madeleine, leaning on her crutches, walked by the side of a venerable old man, unknown in the country, but recognized by us as M. Vincent. The Count and Countess, my lord and lady, did not leave until they saw Christine start for Walburg.

The newly married couple took with them a pretty set of furniture, brought from Strasbourg, and presented to them by Pierre. There seemed that day an air of happiness in the atmosphere of the valley. All faces were radiant.

When Pierre was alone with his mother, he embraced her tenderly, and said :

“O mother! if you had not those crutches!”

“Do not say that, my son. I do not wish to separate myself from them; I love them. For, my dear Pierre, I believe that all mothers purchase by their sufferings the happiness and affections of their children.”



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